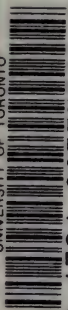
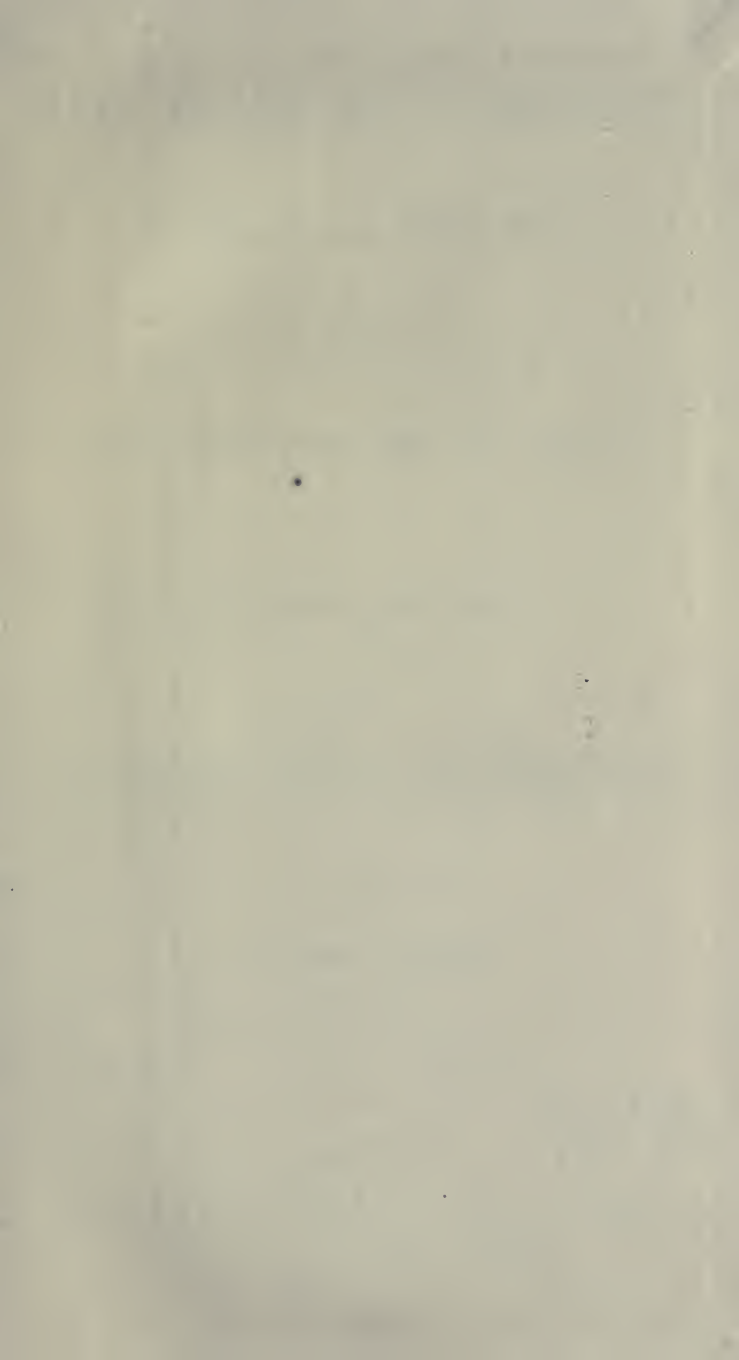


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FIFTY YEARS' RECOLLECTIONS,

LITERARY AND PERSONAL,

WITH

OBSERVATIONS ON MEN AND THINGS.

BY CYRUS REDDING.

"Relations of matter of fact have a value from their substance, as much as from their form, and the variety of events is seldom without entertainment or instruction, how indifferently soever the tale is told."—SIR W. TEMPLE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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CONTENTS

OF

THE THIRD VOLUME.

CHAPTER I.

The Metropolitan Established—Gabrielle—Notice by Campbell—Remarks on Misuses of the Press—Last letter from Pringle—Sir William Ousely—Literary Union Club—Death of Mrs. Siddons—Prince Czartoryski—Lord Torrington—Russian Espionage—Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd 1

CHAPTER II.

Irving the Preacher—Barnes of the Times—James Murray—Fearn—Letter from Pierce Egan—Death of Scott—Dr. Evans—The Countess Guiccioli—The Metropolitan sold—London Bridge—False Alarm at the Home Office—North Wales—Publish the History of Wines—Professor Wilson—Scotch Whisky Drinking—Lockhart 20

CHAPTER III.

Melancholy Tale of a Lady—Visit to Bath—Adventures There—Election Doings—Roebuck—General Palmer—Rev. Mr. Liddiard—Rev. Mr. Jay—Local Remarks—Death of Captain Ashe, and of Thelwall—Peter Borthwick and His Avatar in Somersetshire 54

CHAPTER IV.

Literature at Bath—South Wales—Tintern—Ragland—Usk—Conjuring and Astrology—Farleigh Castle—Charlecombe—Sundials . . . 81

CHAPTER V.

Lansdowne Tower—Beckford—Gems of Art—Mansion in Lansdowne Crescent—Dwarf Porter—Introduction—Noble Collection of Books—The Ayeeen Ackbery of Shah Aulum of Delhi—Vathek and its Origin—The Three Episodes—Conversations—Fonthill—Hannah Lightfoot's History . . . 87

CHAPTER VI.

London—Visit to Campbell—Change upon the Poet—His Funeral—Visit to Staffordshire—Duties there—Lichfield—The Close—Local Operations—The Anson Family—Principal Individuals—Election Doings—Success of the Town Party—Lord Alfred Paget Returned—Character of Sir Robert Peel—Ilam—Ascot College—Grace Dieu—Monastery of La Trappe—Sir C. Wolseley—Life of William IV.—Shenstone's Leasowes—Hagley—The Spanish Cloak—Wolverhampton—Skill of our Mechanics—Reminiscences of Character in Lichfield—Placed on the Consular List—Dr. Lord . . . 129

CHAPTER VII.

The Examiner—Death of Lord Holland—Lady Holland and Campbell—Reflections—Visit Staffordshire again—Election Contest—Marquis of Anglesey—Sir George Anson—The English Journal—Works on Cornwall and Lancashire—Painful Remembrances—The Nameless Grave—Lady Cork—Earl Grey—Correspondence with Lord Althorpe—The Smuggler—Sir C. Morgan—Croker and Lady Morgan—Clare the Poet—Pamphlet in Support of Lord Palmerston relative to Turkey in 1840—Singular Extract from . . . 180

CHAPTER VIII.

Theodore Hook—Horace Twiss—Lady Blessington—Lord Dillon—Velasco—Moir of Musselburg—Love of the Country—Thiers—Reviewing—Modern Tendency in Literature—William Holmes—Proposed History of the Duchy of Cornwall—Major-General Anson—Sir G. Magrath—

Nelson—The Parks—Southey's Decease—Conway of Dublin—Designed Naval Work—Remarks on French Invasion—Wordsworth—Martin the Artist—Books—Wine Committee of the House of Commons—Rogers—English and French Women—Camp field Hastings—Breathing a Book-seller—National Conduct in Danger—New Missile . . . 220

CHAPTER IX.

Literary Peculiarities—Tricks upon Authors—Modern Reading—Newspaper Proprietaries—Clubs—Love of Notoriety—Sir T. N. Talfourd—The London Magazine—Lord Brougham and Works for the Poorer Classes—Penny Magazine—Profligate Writing—Douglas Jerrold . . . 295

CHAPTER X.

Modern Tendencies—John Wilson Croker—Departure of Old Acquaintances—Feelings in Consequences—A Happy Man—Reflections—Changes and Improvements—Geographical Discoveries—Increase of Population and General Advance of the Times—New Inventions—Increased Revenue and Trade—Great Names—State of Literature—The Drama—Music—Changes in Dress—General Retrospect—Conclusion . . . 319



FIFTY YEARS' RECOLLECTIONS,

LITERARY AND PERSONAL.

CHAPTER I.

A PUBLISHER, Mr. Cochrane, then resident in Waterloo Place, spoke to me upon the subject of a new work, to be called 'The Metropolitan.' Would I undertake it and obtain Campbell as the editor? It was not possible to pay him as he had been paid before; he should have a moiety of the sum, and only send in a few verses when he pleased. The terms were agreed to; and we started a work which gave good promise of success. Moore, who would not touch the 'New Monthly' from its original sin, at once consented to contribute; and Montgomery, of Sheffield, to give his lectures. Montgomery was a most amiable man, with no very fixed principles of a political nature. Several old literary friends joined us, and Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, and Delta, of 'Blackwood's Magazine;' in other words, the lamented Mr. Moir, of Musselburgh. I had made a notice of his little 'History of Medicine,' with which he was much pleased.

Musselburgh, July 5th,

" Sir,

" I herewith send you three poetical tales, that you may select from those the one that seems most adapted for insertion in the 'Metropolitan.'

" Not having the honor of a personal acquaintance with Mr. Campbell (being, unfortunately, unable to meet him the last time he dined with Professor Wilson), I have thought it best to present these tales through you, having been informed through Mr. ——— that you wished me to send something for the 'Metropolitan.' Having received the first numbers, with the compliments of the editor, may I request the favor of your receiving my best thanks for the same, and also for the very kind and flattering notice of my 'Ancient History of Medicine.'

" Should none of the tales sent appear quite adapted for the 'Metropolitan,' I beg that no use of them be made from personal consideration to me; but let them be returned, and I will shortly endeavour to do something else, and, if possible, better. They form part of a series, which some time ago I had arranged for separate publication, but have since deferred the idea. With best wishes for the success of the 'Metropolitan,' which has set out with such fair performance and promise,

" Believe me, most truly yours,

" DAVID M. MOIR."

The poems of Mr. Moir—it is wonderful—have not been collected. He was a delightful poet. While the works of some second-rate trans-Atlantic poets are reprinted here, because the copyright costs nothing, it is

to be regretted that those of better writers should be passed over. Messrs. Blackwood, I presume, possess most of Mr. Moir's productions.

Mr. S. D. Broughton, of the 2nd Life-guards, to which he was the surgeon, contributed excellent scientific articles to the new work. He was the last man in the regiment who had been at Waterloo. He divested his style of all abstruseness, in order to adapt his papers for general perusal. An injury to his ankle caused him to consult his professional friends, who agreed in the necessity of an amputation. He was of their opinion ; but had such a presentiment he should not live, that he drove to Kensall Green to fix on the spot where he should lie. He underwent the operation and died, as he foretold he should do.

We carried on the 'Metropolitan' for nearly two years. Captain Marryat, who had written for it, purchased the copyright of Mr. Valpy, to whom it fell in consequence of the bookseller's failure, at a time it promised exceedingly well. Both Campbell and myself left the publication together, and here our literary labours terminated, having lasted twelve years, during which we had never a dissonant word, and I believe, with a mutual regard for each other which never abated. I can answer for myself.

Not long before this, I published, but almost immediately recalled, a small volume, entitled 'Gabrielle,' a tale. It also contained some of the pieces that had appeared in the 'New Monthly' and in 'Blackwood.' I inscribed it to Campbell. I recalled the work, which was well received, on account of a dispute about some passages. Not two hundred got abroad ; the rest I still have by me.

I was not satisfied, from Horace Smith, urging me to alter some passages, and owing to my freedom with the rhymes. I began to do so ; but the result was, that I never republished it, although it has lain by me ready for many years. Campbell, in one of his impulses, said he would notice it. I remarked, that inscribed to himself, I thought it would look odd. He then wrote the following, which will exhibit how little he thought of the effect likely to be produced by anything he did, considering our relationship in duty. I retain it in his own hand-writing, having intercepted it at the printers :—

“ This poem is dedicated to the author of this journal, as a memorial of an uninterrupted intercourse of friendship during many years of literary co-operation. The editor is, therefore, as palpably incapacitated by his relation to Mr. Redding from pretending to speak of his poems with impartiality, as if Mr. R. were his own brother ; but he conceives he should be untrue to the best feelings of a man, if he abstained from thanking his esteemed co-editor for this testimony of his personal regard, or if he were unwilling to testify that, in no relations of life, or business of literature, has he met with more undeviating honour and principle, more equal temper, more useful knowledge, and more effective assistance, than he found as editor of the ‘ New Monthly ’ from the author of these poems.”

Though such a testimony from such a poet was valuable, I feared it would be liable to misconstruction in print, in a work in which we were mutually concerned.

I had sent an early copy to Rogers. Pringle was on his way from the poet of memory one morning, and bought me a message as follows :—

“Pray make my warmest acknowledgments to Mr. Redding for the honour he has done me. I am reading his poems with exceeding pleasure. They are full of fancy and feeling, and written with great elegance. I am particularly struck with ‘The Voiceless City.’

This reference is to some verses originally in the ‘New Monthly,’ vol. 16, p. 404, entitled ‘The City of the Dead.’ I had changed the title in the volume.

“Rogers’ praise is worth having,” said Pringle; “I can only say that, judging from the three or four pieces which I am ashamed to say are all I have yet perused, I sincerely concur in his opinion.” Professor Wilson noticed it in ‘Blackwood.’

Lord Holland wrote me, acknowledging the pleasure he received at the perusal of the volume; and, subsequently, I had the expression of satisfaction with them from the author of ‘Vathek.’

Then, why stop the publication to this hour? The truth is, there were points purely relative to taste in composition, which, on being pointed out and reasoned upon, I determined to change. The cost of the little volume had not been enormous. Year after year passed away; I went on altering a line now and then, and neglected making other changes, until I found more leisure to complete them. By the time this was done, it seemed to me that the taste for poetry in the style I should alone think of writing, had passed away from the land. I did not desire to be more than a humble follower of that school which has given marks of endurance, and would fain rather not appear at all, than aid the downward march of the hour, in that tone which depresses in place of elevating the objects of our mental

desires. The poems will now probably never see the light with my corrections—no matter, it will be soon a thing as indifferent to me that they ever existed, as my own existence will be to the world.

It is painful to know how often the press is debased—how mean are the acts by which the noblest of instruments is polluted in making it a medium of public deception. Nor is avarice the only cause of its misuse. Those who have conducted publications of some moment well know how many there are in society who seek to enlist its aid for the gratification of malice, the depreciation of talent, and the arts of unfair dealing. From the crier of his false wares by the itinerant pedlar; and from the dealer in publications, to the politician in office, there is one continual war waged against truth by the spirit of self-interest. Many busy hours have been interrupted by those who sought interviews for purposes of the most selfish nature, and I have had it hinted too clearly to be mistaken, that my censure of such a thing—say a picture of a brother artist—would be gratefully acknowledged. I have had the abuse of a cotemporary poured into my ears for a design it was imagined I did not perceive, and I have then asked openly, “What cause of hatred have you against this individual that you want to poison my mind regarding him?” I was, thank God, proof against the rascality continually exhibited of rendering periodical literature a vehicle for my own advantage by accepting books from publishers to be praised before the public, and thus eking out a sale of bad or good works, and laying the trader under obligations, for which you contemplated a return at another time. I once determined, to receive no requests, but by

note. I made no custom of the society that I knew was interested in using me as its instrument. I evaded invitations to evening parties, and going into company in which persons were to be met who were difficult to refuse. Public dinners and revels do not consort with the pursuits of honest literature. I do not believe a minister of state, though he has a wider field of view, expatiating among the magnates in statutes, if not in virtues; I do not think a minister of state sees more of the latent meanness and hypocrisy of human nature than the editor of one of our larger publications did in the time gone by. Literary men may have no peculiar saintship of which to boast, beyond their neighbours; but if they have not some scintillation of virtue left—some troublesome scanty remnants of integrity—they fulfil an office for which they are unfit. I would appeal to honest literary men for the correctness of the statement. In the present day, the *noli me tangere* system covers a multitude of sins. The most vicious, it has been thought, may use the press with unwashed hands, as if honesty were not as necessary in authorship as in a banking-house. This is one cause in those who know the press by experience qualifying much of its utility.

I have mentioned Thomas Pringle before. He was the son of a Scotch agriculturist, who early in life became known to Sir Walter Scott by a poem, called 'Scenes of Teviotdale.' After starting 'Blackwood's Magazine,' he had a dispute with Blackwood and separated from the editorship. He soon afterwards emigrated to the Cape, and settled with his aged father at Albany. His lameness—for he was obliged to use crutches—rendered him unfit for a farmer's life, and he went to Cape

Town, having letters from Sir Walter Scott to Lord Charles Somerset. He sent articles home for the 'New Monthly,' and published a volume of sweet poetry, called 'The Ephemerides,' and another, entitled 'African Sketches.' In 1834, I found him in lodgings in Bryanstone Street, rapidly sinking from a broken blood-vessel. He had taken a passage to the Cape in order to be off before the cold weather set in, thinking the climate might restore him. The Captain declared he should sail in a week. Pringle had paid his passage-money, and had been kept six or seven weeks waiting when I saw him. He had hoped to be in a warm latitude before the winter. Thus cheated, and the cold setting in, he became worse and expired December 5th. I shook hands with him—death on his countenance. He expired with that moral courage which belongs to a virtuous life. He was a man of simple mind and manners, for whom I had a strong regard. His abilities were of no mean order. His last letter came to me at Bath, just before his death.

6, Portman Street, Portman Sq.

"Dear Mr. Redding,—I have been very ill since June last, in consequence of the rupture of a blood-vessel in the lungs. I am now on the point of flying to South Africa to escape the deadly influence of our moist English climate, and in the hope of recovering a sound state of health. It is not probable—be my days few or many—that I shall ever return. I have had enough of the bustle and fagg of life; and, if I have only the humblest competency, I shall sit down content in that fine climate, under my own vine and fig-tree, without

troubling myself further about the affairs of the great world. If you are in town, pray come and see me.

“Is the paragraph true in the papers which says Campbell is gone to Algiers? If so, I must provide myself with a speaking trumpet to roar into his lug from the Cape of Storms,

“Yours very truly,

“THOMAS PRINGLE.”

Sir William Ouseley I used to meet often, he was one of those literary men who are at times so absorbed in the object of his pursuit as to lose sight of other things altogether. His knowledge in Oriental literature as to extent compared to some distinguished scholars, I am unable to state with accuracy. His Oriental collections were the work of the last century, began about 1798. I doubt whether he was so well known here by his elucidations of Oriental subjects as on the continent. His ‘Oriental Geography of Ebn Hankal’ appeared in 1800. The tales of ‘Bakhtyar’ and the ‘Ten Virgins’ followed. He was a member of a number of learned societies, a profound Persian scholar, and would have largely contributed to increase our knowledge of the historians of that country, but for want of public encouragement. These are not now likely ever to appear in an English dress, as the taste for Eastern learning, in all its branches, has since Sir William’s death rapidly declined. It is only through societies upon the plan of the Camden and others, that any of the works of the Orientalists—or, indeed, any similar subjects from other sources—can again be expected to appear in an English garb, so little is the public interest felt in

learned topics. We had many agreeable interviews ; and I listened with pleasure to the instructive observations of so remarkable a scholar.

The scheme of a literary club had been promulgated by Campbell, without any definite arrangement for carrying it out. It began by the meeting of a few friends at his house of an evening, when the matter was talked over, but for some time without any result. At length a committee was appointed, Mr. J. D. Moore, a gentleman of the medical profession, acting as secretary. Subsequently the meetings took place at the British Coffee House. Still no definite plan was arranged. Campbell wished me as a member to take the arrangements in hand, and push it forward. There were lectures to be given, conversaziones to be held, in fact, it was to be a unique literary establishment. I consented, unused as I was to similar undertakings, for it was easy to see that the poet, as usual, would soon slacken in attention. He had no idea of the details, nor had I, for he began to think only of the lectures. The weight of the whole fell upon myself, until I had received a good sum of money, when the committee, formed as before, saw the thing would succeed, and it became a fact. It was agreed to take the house in Waterloo Place, which the Athenæum Club had just vacated, and here the number of additional members became so great that there were ample funds. The arrangements required attention. I soon saw what was necessary to be done, but I regretted to observe that literary objects began to be lost sight of, and that the whole would degenerate into a London West End Club. At the end of the year I gave an account of my

stewardship, of the expenditure of some thousands of pounds, and of the complete formation. I then resigned all connection with the arrangements. The club voted me its thanks, and the freedom of the institution without the annual payment. One captious opponent alone to the vote appearing, I preferred to be independent and to pay my annual quota. I was a member only to the end of 1833; for quitting London early the following year, I knew little of its proceedings afterwards, but by hearsay. Its name was changed, and it afterwards became the Clarence. I know not the precise year of its dissolution after it was thus reformed and newly named.

There were many pleasant individuals in the Literary Union. Some entertainments were given there to distinguished individuals, not only of rank, but of literary or political renown. The committee consisted of Prince Cimitelli, Viscount Torrington, Sir F. Freeling, Sir G. Duckett, Sir G. T. Staunton, Sir G. Ouseley, Messrs. Campbell, Mackinnon, I. L. Goldsmid, Lockhart, Martin, Watson, Smirnov, Wade, Ayrton, Lardner, Barnes, Henderson, Pickersgill and Webster. There were a great number of literary men belonging to it, and many who were lovers of literature. Such as that gallant old soldier, Sir John Elley of the Blues, also General Hardwick, Sir E. Codrington, Lord A. Fitzclarence, and others. Augustus William Schlegel, Sir Walter Scott, Professor Wilson, Cuvier, Goristiza, A. Montemont, Baron Bulow, and several of the foreign Ambassadors, were also honorary members. Mackworth Praed, Campbell, Sir John Elley, and one or two more used to cause me a great waste of time. I had as much of

the weight of the 'Metropolitan' on my hands as I had before of the "New Monthly," but here the small print matter was far less complicated. The Literary Union was on my hands at the same moment. Idlers used to come in of a morning and occupy my time by conversation, so that I found I had difficulty in proceeding, having to double application in my task.

Mrs. Siddons died about this period. I used to meet her occasionally at Campbell's. On the stage, I have said before, nothing could surpass her in power, in majesty, in the divinity that hedges a queen. In private society, the heroine fell into the woman. We do not like to have our idealities spoiled in this way. Neither the Queen of Sheba, nor Semiramis, nor she who's dalliance lost the Roman a world, could rank higher than the royalty of Mrs. Siddons when she trod the stage, but I became an iconoclast when I met her in the drawing-room. My idol was shattered, the glorious illusion departed, and I wondered how I had ever been so deceived. Again, when the woman was no longer before me, when pale death had made her the partner of his bed of dust, when she could no more deteriorate to the visual sense and put on ordinary womanhood, the transcendent merit of her image on the stage, the sovereign of tragedy, came back again above womanhood, above that cold obstruction which is the lot of mortality. She became again radiant in her remembered glory as I first beheld her, with the keen perception and ardent gaze of astonished youth, the magic of memory heightening her dignity and exalting every hue, not of her own person and dress alone, but of all the accessories that surrounded her, to which she seemed to lend grace

and grandeur. Wonderful that quality of the human mind which thus recalls and heightens objects beyond their pristine freshness, as time expands the gulph between.

Select dinners were given at the club, by those who left a certain notice. One of these was to Prince Czartoryski, who made some difficulty at first in joining, fearing it would have a political construction. I was deputed to call upon the heir of the great line of Jagellon, in Holles Street, and succeeded in removing his apprehensions on this point. The prince came attended by the poet Niemcewicz, who shared the dungeon in St. Petersburg with Kosciuszko, a venerable noble old man. Achille Murat, the eldest son of the ex-King of Naples, was of the party. He died not long afterwards. He resembled his mother Caroline Bonaparte, more than his father, being delicate in person rather than robust, and like his father, he did not seem to be endowed with any extraordinary degree of intellectual power.

Viscount Torrington, when Captain Byng, married first into a family, the hospitalities of which I had often shared at Plymouth. We used to speak of that family frequently, and recall things that had passed away many years before. A party was made up of eight or ten, and we had voted Lord Torrington in the chair. He had not been noticed near the club for some little time, but we thought nothing of that, and Captain C—— wrote to Yotes Court in consequence, giving him notice that he was nominated chairman for that day at a select party. To our surprise he wrote me, perhaps the last letter he ever did write, on which account I give it.

Yotes C. May 29.

"My dear Sir,

"Captain C. wrote me to come down to some dinner and preside. God knows, if able, I should be delighted. Are you aware that I have been confined to my room some weeks, and mostly to my bed. I have gone through two severe operations, and have had a narrow escape for my life. Though now I am getting better, still my wounds are open, and I dare not allow them to heal yet, and I am so weak I can hardly walk across the room. I fear I am doomed not to see London for months, I write from my pillow. I hope you will make this known to our friends—that is I beg you to explain my situation to our friends.

"Most faithfully yours,

"TORRINGTON."

"C. Redding, Esq."

Our dinner was scarcely placed on the table before the gallant admiral was no more. He married, for his first wife, Miss Langmead of Plymouth. Her brothers, John and William, resided one in the town, and the other at his seat a few miles off, opulent and much respected. I had partaken repasts at Mr. William Langmead's, and suppers after the fortnightly balls, visited by the principal people of the town in right hospitable times. It is melancholy to look back on the dead "who while they lived seemed nothing, yet when dead every man speaks of them what they please; and afterwards they are as if they had not been."

There was Sir Robert Wilson, Meyrick the antiquary, Pierce Mahony, Lawrence of the general post office, Daniel

and Maurice O'Connell, Godfrey Higgins, Jabez Henry Barry O'Meara, Crofton Croker, Captains Glascock, Toker and Oldrey, R.N., Dr. James Johnson, Captain Doran, Samuel Beazley, who have all passed away. Charles Mackenzie, Thomas Holmes, Poole of Paul Pry celebrity, Bach the German Jurisconsult, an excellent friendly hearted man, George Webster, and others of the old circle still survive—but this kind of enumeration is idle work. There was White, too, who died recently, having been for many years secretary for Trinidad. He was a well informed man, and had been appointed consul at one of the Russian ports. He had been intimate with some of the leading Poles in England, and this had been communicated by spies from our side of the water. When White had been at a considerable expense for his outfit and reached his post, he had a spy placed upon him by the government of the Emperor Nicolas, in the person of a Russian nobleman, who became his double everywhere. He was obliged to return home, and the Russian *mouchard* wanted to get into White's carriage with him, but the latter thrust him back by force of arm. He told me this himself. He then obtained his appointment at Trinidad. He was a clever, spirited, and considerate public servant.

Some of Campbell's forgetfulnesses were curious, showing how much he acted on momentary impulse. He wrote to a friend in the summer of 1831. "I am not afraid of civil war now, O'Connell has been put down." In November, I had been down at St. Leonard's where the poet was staying, and I told him I had found a fling at the great Irishman in our dramatic article. A fit of sensitiveness came upon him, for I

had not been forty-eight hours back in town before he wrote :

“ My dear Redding,

“ I pray you to strike out any sentence about O’Connell in our theatrical article. You must not hit my friend Dan. You shall have my poem positively on Friday. I have done ninety lines, and shall have nine more to-morrow. I entreat you to see that the printing is correct, for I fear I can have no proof, though try if it be possible. You will not fail to come on Sunday. I wish you would ask Mr. C—— if I can get a dozen copies of my poems down. Perhaps you would have the kindness to bring them.

“ Yours very truly,

“ T. CAMPBELL.”

Now this was nothing more than the result of O’Connell’s having joined the Literary Union. Meeting the poet, O’Connell won him over by his open manner. All fear of “ civil war ” was driven off by Dan’s civil manners.

Meeting Maurice O’Connell at dinner two or three weeks before his decease, I put the question to him, revived by the newspapers at that moment, as to whether his father had not in his presence, some years before, told me at his own dinner table, that Mr. Disraeli had made overtures to be admitted to be one of his supporters, it was surmised with a view to get into parliament, and that his father said it was true, but he would not have him. Maurice O’Connell could not recollect the time of his father’s stating it to myself

personally at his own table, but he assured me it was perfectly true. My motive was merely to convince a party of his error, who would not credit the fact that Mr. Disraeli had belonged to every political party.

Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, I did not know in his own country. He was an extraordinary instance of the triumph of natural genius over obstacles. Tens of thousands have had more advantages. What is called so falsely "education," in other words "reading and writing," has been dispersed far and wide to the indigent in early youth, yet not one man equal to Hogg has appeared from the classes thus endowed, that were to produce a race according to some, to add to England's literary renown all over the world! Hogg could scarcely read a letter at twenty years of age, yet at twenty-four he began to compose verses, those of Burns not letting him sleep. There is Clare, that beautiful poet of nature. Education given to the humble or the rich did not make the men, who surmounting all obstacles have become intellectually noted. Yet this was, and is expected by silly people. I speak not against education, for I believe in its utility, but against the vulgar idea of the vulgar minded in every rank of life, that reading and writing is alone wanting to give us a race of great men. Nature keeps their fabrication to herself, and will continue to do so as long as the world lasts. To myself Hogg conveyed the idea of one born in a higher grade of life. That which most betrayed his early position and habits was that his bearing, in any novelty of position, made him show not awkwardness, but apprehension. In London he was bewildered. He would sit and drink

as Scotchmen do when in company within doors, full of confidence and somewhat of conceit, but things were so new and overwhelming to him in the metropolis, out of doors, that he would not venture to cross a street without holding by the arm of another. Even the frail arm of Murray, the bookseller, was a tower of strength to him, and yet he was a hardy man.

He complained to me that Wilson made a show of him in 'Blackwood.' This was coquetry, he did not really dislike it; he was eager for notoriety. I told him that but for Wilson, we Southerners should scarcely have known anything about him.

"Aye, but Wilson is too bad, for he makes me say things I could not dream of uttering."

Hogg was a much quieter man than Wilson made him out, and was reported to say things he was too well informed to utter. His writings are eminently Scotch, and were not adapted to make a sensation in this country. I confess in all I ever saw of Hogg, which was not much, I was greatly prepossessed in favour of his abilities. While he was in town, it was proposed to give him a dinner on the anniversary of the birth-day of Burns. I was named a steward with Lockhart and several friends. Campbell was nominated also, but he was in the country, On repairing to the Freemason's Tavern to make preparatory arrangements for a meeting of the stewards to provide the dinner, we found that the whole had been clandestinely done. The tickets were twenty-two shillings. One of the stewards, who went with me, was equally surprized at this intelligence, and we neither of us attended. Sir John Malcolm was in the chair. I had a note of excuse from

Campbell, which, as I did not attend, I sent to the chairman for the purpose of its being read. Sir John declined doing so, saying he was in the hands of the stewards, but what stewards were his instructors we could never learn. I wrote to Sir John, who exonerated himself by a note, explaining the matter as far as he was concerned. Two or three out of the eight or ten stewards nominated, had secretly settled all, binding Sir John to their toasts, not having communicated with any others. Nor was this all, the dinner was paltry—the affair looked like a job—there was not enough food for the guests present, four shillings a head would have amply covered it. I sent an account of the whole disgraceful affair to the “Athenæum,” which had shrewdly enquired what was the reason myself and others were absent from the lenten affair. It had good ground for the question, but surmise would not prove the facts of a disgraceful character connected with that affair. Hogg was never in London afterwards.

CHAPTER II.

JUST after the Hogg dinner, I was riding over Hampstead Heath with a friend. On the summit of the hill, upon the London side, stands a tree with a seat around it. Upon this seat stood, at that moment, the apostle of the unknown tongues, Irving, the Scotch preacher. He was at that time a lion of the hour. This Scotch Huntingdon made the town crazy by denunciations and prophetic out-pourings. His lank black locks and his style of countenance were enough to make religion seem anything but agreeable. The unknown tongues were the rage then, as table-rapping is now. Irving gave the idea of John Knox. His countenance would have suited an inquisitor, or one of those middle-age gentry, who burned and executed all who would not choose that others should believe for them. Tall, gaunt, and striking, his discourses borrowed much from his personal appearance and vehemence of diction. He had stout Presbyterian notions. What he said, when analized, came to nothing; he had no grasp of mind. A considerable crowd was around him, silent and attentive. We stopped to listen. I almost fancied one of the old scenes of the Scotch covenanters was come back, as his

sooty curls quivered under his polemic thunderings. My friend's wife and another lady were sitting in a carriage listening most attentively when we came up. His horse, at the moment, chose to recognize his acquaintances in the carriage, just after we arrived, by a most sonorous neigh, drowning the minister's voice and producing the most ludicrous effect. We instantly rode away, and I never saw any more of this wild seven-day wonder afterwards. The Caledonian attitudinising prophet soon went out of fashion with the fickle public, the novelty being over. Anything will go down that perplexes. Take as of yore, the proof of the Spanish priest, who declared in demonstration that the Virgin Mary was pregnant twenty months—" *Hic mensus sextus est illi.*" Where there are six, there must be five; six and five are eleven; where there are eleven, there must be nine; now eleven and nine are twenty. Religion is only acceptable where it is mysterious and unintelligible. His printed matter was miserable, irrational stuff. The spirits that effect good among mankind, it appears to me, must be more ethereally touched—more mentally expanded. A man like Irving was never wrong, as he would have it. Such a divine carries infallibility with him. "You have given me a wrong name, for the prayers for the sick, it is James," said the parson to his clerk; "I'm certain I'm right, Sir; is it not the wrong person that is sick? That's not my fault." Such was the logic of Irving. It belonged to the certain ages, when logicians ranked so high in syllogism. "Chicken broth is a true substance, but chicken broth is immediately operative, therefore substance is immediately operative."

Sir James Mackintosh died before Campbell and myself quitted the 'Metropolitan,' just at this time. He shone best, I thought, in expounding certain principles of morals or politics. He was eloquent, logical, and his stores of information great; but I doubt whether anything he did equalled his capabilities. His conversation was striking. His 'Vindicæ Gallicæ' remains his best work. He exhibited nothing original. As a scholar, Dr. Parr doubted, whether Jamie was up to a verb in *μ*. He never got well over the tergiversation he showed when Burke became the tempter of his political integrity. He was a complete master of the products of other thinkers, and applied those admirably to his own purposes. Campbell put together a Memoir of Sir James for the 'Metropolitan;' but in it, he skipped Sir James's tergiversation. It was neither a lucid nor satisfactory article. Mackintosh's relics rest under the shade of a large yew, in Hampstead church-yard, where ever terminate those wanderings of metaphysicians, in regard to which the longest existences had found themselves as distant as ever from a conclusion.

Thomas Barnes, of the "Times" paper, used to be one of our club; but his visits were scarce from his avocations. I first knew him when he wrote political characters for "The Examiner," then in the hands of Mr. J. Hunt. He was nominated on the committee of the "Literary Union." He pleaded inability to attend his duty but rarely, from the pressure of his calling. "I beg," he wrote me, "in any case to express my sincere thanks for the very handsome offer you have communicated. I wish I was as conscious of deserving it, as I am of appreciating its worth." There was my old friend,

too, James Murray, of the "Times," who was more active than Barnes. We contrived to dine together once or twice a week ; but his hurry to his duties at night was always a drawback. A noted writer in the "Times" in those days, was Captain Stirling. I do not recollect where I first knew him, nor who introduced me. He did not belong to our society. I was indebted to his son for an introduction to Mrs. Austen, who translated many foreign articles for us.

Mr. Fearn, who had some novel ideas respecting the reception of objects in the censorium through the eye, and about an investigation of its figure, came to me to explain his views, which he deemed of moment to science ; and I made an acquaintance, which lasted till his death. The Royal Society of London thought them worthy of notice, as did Sir Anthony Carlisle. I could not well comprehend all his views ; but he appeared an ingenious, scientific man. Sir D. Brewster slighted the idea, because, perhaps, it did not emanate from the "modern Athens," where only as some philosophers think, all science in these islands must have originated. Something like rational reputation and courtesy were due to an ingenious man elsewhere, if in convincing him, or the world, that he was mistaken. I had a great esteem for Mr. Fearn.

Perhaps the following epistle from the renowned scribe of the "masses," as it is the custom to call them, is not the most unamusing of epistles. The language of the streets and alleys had not then been so much blended with the more popular literature of the day, as it is at present, or Pierce Egan would have ranked higher. The Cicero of the masses, I presume self-educated,

was at that time, the laureate of the dissipated vulgar of the town, as well as their dramatic scribe. He had heard of the "Metropolitan" being about to appear, and he wrote :

April 12.

" Sir,

" It being a matter of business, I trust that no apology will be deemed necessary for what might otherwise be termed an abrupt introduction of myself to your notice ; at the same time I am anxious to escape any thing like the censure of rudeness on my part ; but, in consequence of your advertisement respecting the publication of a new Magazine on the 2nd of May, I have taken the liberty of offering my humble services as a contributor towards its novelty.

" The title, Sir, permit me to observe, is good, which is half the battle won ; but, nevertheless, the ' Metropolitan ' will have his work to do in this age, or rather, ' march of intellect ;' and high, thorough-bred cattle will be wanted on the prolific road of literature to get over the ground with celebrity, amidst a host of competitors and ill-natured and persecuting oppositions to the end of the chapter. Yet, under the guidance of a skilful charioteer, who can mount the box like a whip of the first quality, and use the lash with judgment, who can also handle the ribbons well, keep the literary tits to their work, make them all pull together, and always be on the right side of the road, afraid of nothing on the turf or turnpike, but giving the ' go-by ' like nothing else but a good one, upsets in a great measure will be prevented—the journey not only rendered complete

and certain, but amusing, valuable, and attractive into the bargain; and, as the immortal Shakspeare has it, 'think of that Master Brooke,' giving a character to the 'Metropolitan' for always booking well both inside and outside passengers—a consummation devoutly to be wished.

"The 'Metropolitan' will have a fine and fertile field for his feather; and now and then the graver might be employed on rich ideas, giving to 'airy nothings a local habitation and a name,' with great effect—to catch the manners as they rise, morning, noon, and night! But, Sir, 'be not CLASSICAL over-much!' Let the quill of the 'Metropolitan' be exercised to please all classes of society—the lower—the 'middling,' if you like the term better—as well as the upper stories of the domus—*i.e.*, let no article be 'caviare' to the million! Common sense against the field. Be at all, aye, all times hand and glove with Sterne as to sentiment; also as inquisitive upon all subjects as 'Paul Pry,' to hold the mirror up to life and nature; but, believe, Mr. 'Metropolitan,' of the ghosts of Tom and Jerry; thanks to the new police, they have been laid for some time past; watching and larking are likewise at an end; and the 'peep-o'-day boys' have long since gone to roost!

"Of all things, Sir, (but, if I dare not take the liberty to advise, I only mean to hint) let not the 'Metropolitan' frighten his readers with ponderous Greek quotations (both Porson and Dr. Parr having retired to the tombs of their ancestors); neither let him put the blush upon them with numerous Latin sentences; and, likewise, teach him to steer clear of interlarding his paragraphs with French words. But, if it

must be so—if it should seem good that the ‘Metropolitan’ is anxious to show the finished scholar—let him also write with it the good-natured gentleman, by being communicative with his patrons, giving them a free translation of all the learned passages he may think proper to quote ; and not leave them in the dark to mourn over their ignorance and their neglect of education.

“I flatter myself, Sir, that your good sense, kindness, and ‘encouragement to literature,’ will pardon the above ideas hastily put together ; but my intercourse with the world for the last twenty years, and also with the press, has taught me to know that a man may be the refined, stately critic in his closet, and as erudite in his language as a Johnson, or a Horne Tooke, over his pen and ink ; but in his intercourse with those creatures who ‘strut and fret’ their hours in the public walks of society, respecting a knowledge of men and manners, I have too often found them as ‘flat as a pan-cake’ as to description, or little better than a mere learned idiot. However, I trust I shall see the ‘Metropolitan’ prove himself entitled to the character of a well-bred gentleman, conversant upon all subjects that can elevate him in the minds of all classes of readers.

“Being tolerably well acquainted with metropolitan scenes and public characters, I feel quite satisfied a variety of subjects might be ‘hit off’ to please and interest the public in general. Mistake me not, Sir, I do not mean in the ‘slang’ style ; no, no : there are actors to be found who can throw off the character by the dress ; or, as the late facetious Peter Pindar has well observed :

A picture that is called light !
Psha ! monstrous—a perfect fright !
No—let some darkness be display'd
And learn to balance well with shade !

I repeat that some amusing articles might be produced under the signatures of the 'Exile in the Metropolis,' 'Strolls after Dark,' 'A Peep-o'-Day Boy,' or 'Paul Pry's Adventures,' &c. &c. But I will be candid, Sir, to save time ; it would not suit my purpose to send articles upon chance. I flatter myself my experience and success with John Bull and his numerous family, places me far above that situation.

"But, Sir, if you should entertain a second thought on what I have hastily written to you, as to an engagement for eight, twelve, or sixteen pages, monthly, more or less, a line addressed as under will meet with due attention ; but, whether or not, I wish the 'Metropolitan' may become a fixed star in the literary hemisphere ; and its brilliancy of talent, and excellence of taste, be acknowledged to remain as such by the greatest of all patrons—the patronage of the public. I have the honor to remain,

"Your humble servant,
"PIERCE EGAN."

The news of Sir Walter Scott's death came painfully upon my ear. It was nine years since I had seen him. He had gone through town to Scotland, and the result was not unexpected. I had very scanty knowledge of him. He was in London, I think, but twice after my return from the continent. There was nothing about him to strike a stranger at first ; and he spoke

somewhat in the English northern dialect, rather than the Scotch. His features were eminently Scotch, and common-place, except his forehead, which was high. On the whole, they left little impression of intellectual power. Compared with Canning or Roscoe, his presence was greatly to his disadvantage. He left in the well-built upper part of his person much of the impress of weight and thought, while his slight lameness made his lower limbs appear proportionably feeble. He had not what in England would be called the air of a gentleman, but much that characterised the natives of his own land. His physiognomy, as a whole, bore no mark of the powerful intellect he possessed ; his eyes, grey and small, were covered by bushy brows ; his hair grey. He was tall—much above the middle height—I should say six feet, or within an inch of it. His countenance greatly improved in expression when he spoke ; but his aspect in general appeared to be grave and thoughtful. His manners were wholly unaffected.

Called a poet by many, his fame rests upon his prose works, and mainly upon his fictions—not that his tales in verse are not delightful. He loved verse, and began his career with it ; but poetry is something more than story-telling, however spirited the recital of an event may be. It must be pervaded by a peculiar emanation from the heart—nature's own sparing endowment. It is not a confluence of rhyme, which so many imagine to be poetry, which will endure. Scott, in his works of fiction, displayed wonderful skill and resources ; while no one understood better how to turn the public to a thrifty advantage. He knew the value of his mystery after he published "Waverley," and made an excellent

use of it. The world regards its own momentary gratification alone. It will elevate or depress its idols with the same indifference. It ever keeps to the mode. It is organized without a heart, and, therefore, for a writer to feel gratitude to the world is a needless matter. The glory of "Waverley" made way for the other works, well worthy of their author; and a few that were the reverse. "Waverley" afforded delight to thousands while its author lived, and will delight the unborn millions in their turn, who will not peruse his works because they came out as a mystery, but from their instinctive merit and the pleasure they impart. Scott's prodigious memory and long study of antiquities were great aids. When the story was historical, the names of his heroes, and the bearing of the whole work were familiar, that is, he had not to invent them; much wear and tear of mind this way were spared. Then he had at hand the traditions of his countrymen in relation to barbarous scenes and times, poor among the poorest as they were, some only freebooters. He embellished all. He clothed the semi-barbarous robber in purple, and made heroes of miserable banditti, and even tinselled with ancestral renown the highwayman and cattle-stealer. His exaggerations in this respect were grateful to his countrymen. He raised Scotch pride, not on the ground of the acknowledged industry, economy, and improved condition of their country, so visible in these advanced times, but he made it great by misrepresentation, of which no one knew the fallacy better than himself. He thus tickled the pride of the Scotchman, not with what was his due alone, but with the reflection that he was descended from border rogues, magnified into heroes,

whose originals, perhaps, died on a gibbet upon British ground for their exploits, or became the merited victims of justice in the metropolis of their own land. Though Scott's prejudices ran counter to advancing civilization and to freedom—though he barbacued Covenanters with a zeal becoming Laud of high church renown, under the Stuarts, whom he revered—and though he extolled the meanest agents of the lowest despotisms, while the name of Argyle was politically repulsive to him—he painted his scenes so well, so freshly, with so much of nature's truth, so much above all rivalry, that he commanded and merited the admiration he received, even from those conscious of his misrepresentations. He covered the hollow and unsubstantial with gold; he invested the deformed and barbarous in light so dazzling, that they were unobserved; he clothed with beauty scenes of the most ordinary character, and polished the ruffian lord of feudal days with the manners that grace, and the courage which elevates only the refined. He magnified and exalted all. He never revelled in the degrading scenes of vicious and low life, travelling downwards, to render them objects of vulgar admiration. How many proselytes he added to Jacobite notions none can tell; but, if not many, now the Stuart race is gone by for ever, he wonderfully strengthened the patience of those yet within its pale by confirming their political faith. Nor is it impossible that his works have aided those who are now exalting the barbarian glories of the middle ages in creed and the arts. The works of so potent an enchanter operate long and in many directions.

The death of this great writer came upon the world like

an electric shock. His name had been so long on every tongue, he had touched the chords of every human feeling so often, that it seemed as if a fibre of the heart had snapped asunder.

How singular that so powerful a mind should have possessed so little philosophy. Speaking of him and his love of ancestral honours, Wilson told me "they were a passion with Scott." His desire to be the "founder of a family was unconquerable." He had again and again been astonished at Scott's weakness in this respect—it was beyond credibility—it was "an infatuation he, Wilson, could not comprehend."

Where is that infatuation—that ambition—now?—the object of the long toils and the resolute labour of his hard-earned acres? His progeny gone a few years after his own death! Verily, "the spirits of the good *do sit in the clouds*" and mock man and his monuments, and man will not look up at them and take the lesson of his own nothingness.

I lodged at Hampstead at this time; not far off lived Dr. Evans, who had a fine educational establishment there in the house occupied by Lord North, during the American war; he afterwards, I believe, went to Australia. Campbell, who had spent a day with me and remained over night, disappeared suddenly in the morning. He had agreed to examine the boys in Greek. Thinking he had gone over to Evans to breakfast, I crossed the Heath; but the poet was not there. The time for the exhibition drew near. A considerable company had assembled on the lawn, which is retired. Lord North boasted to some of his friends one day, that he was as secluded there as if he were twenty miles from

town, asserting that there was nothing to break the illusion, when, at the same moment, a Jew with the well-known grunt of "clo', clo'" passed, and turned the laugh against him. There was a summer house in the garden, where the coachman cut the throat of the cook, for which he was hung on the branches of an old elm, still standing without the garden, by the road-side. Awnings and tables had been placed on the ground, under the trees, the day being fine. I was strolling among the flower-beds and talking, while expressing my wonder what had become of Campbell, when I heard his voice, "Redding, I want you." Turning round, I saw him with a lady on his arm, and a strange gentleman. It was the Countess Guiccioli and her brother, Count Gamba. He had begun to recollect that he had a duty to perform to our host; and he, therefore, handed over the lady to my care. She soon complained of the chillness of the atmosphere. I proposed going into the house, which we did, taking possession of a parlour which overlooked the lawn, where we remained until the examinations were over.

When the company adjourned to partake of a collation, we joined the rest, and I marked curious glances cast upon the Countess by the ladies present. It was highly amusing. No one but Campbell would have thought of introducing the lady where the company young and old was so heterogeneous. He had promised in his customary impulsive way to take her to the school exhibition, never for a moment imagining that some strait-laced people might look curiously at the lady, and that daughters might put curious questions to mammas about the stranger. She, too, had visited Lady Bless-

ington, where no English lady could go who had the slightest regard for her own reputation. The Countess was unconscious of all this, and she might have ascribed the too curious stare of some present, simply to curiosity.

The Guiccioli was then in full womanhood, about twenty-eight years old; she might have been a year older; but she looked about that age. She was a *blonde*, with pleasing features and golden hair. She seemed to be sedate, rather than animated, in disposition. Her face was too full to be called handsome, in an artistic view. She was about the middle height of woman, thickly made, not at all what would be called "fat," but stout. She spoke English like a native; appeared conversant with our authors, and as well acquainted with the prominent topics of the passing hour, as if she had been an Englishwoman. In fact, she owned to reading the newspaper every day, and that attentively. She might well have been taken for a provincial native of England. She was, certainly, a superior woman in general acquirements, to the majority of her sex. Byron had, no doubt, taken great pains in teaching her his native tongue, and instructing her in the character of our best known writers, at least sufficiently so to enable her to speak of her acquaintance with them. No one broke in upon us for the best part of two hours, and the Countess showed no loss of conversational topics, speaking correctly and deliberately. In fact, I was agreeably disappointed in my pre-conceived idea of her manners and person. The former were those of a lady who had been accustomed to society, in the enlarged sense, polished and easy. In Count Gamba, I found a plain, well-behaved foreign gentleman, and no more.

Campbell never told me that the Countess was in London ; and, when he made the appointment with the lady, he had come out to Hampstead, wholly forgetting it, until he rose in the morning ; he then hastened back to town to fetch her.

The "Metropolitan" was now resigned to Captain Marryat, who had purchased it. The Captain imagined he could compass everything with it, full of the idea that a good novel-writer must be an accomplished man for such a purpose. He had a great deal of that ambition which Sidney Smith ascribed to Lord John Russell, when he said that Lord John Russell would take the command of the Channel fleet, if it were offered to him. He had, it is true, seen much of the world, knew a little of a good many things, and was versatile. The characters in his writings were excellent, though his works had no plot. We had some hard words about certain remarks of mine on a translation of Juvenal, of which he affected to be a judge, but of which he knew really no more than of Timbuctoo. He was of an overbearing, selfish temper, unjust where his ambition or interest interfered, and did not always go to work straightforward. I once promised to visit him at Langham. I did not go down, for there was ever to me something distasteful about him ; it was impossible to be cordial.

London Bridge was constructing at this time. The local manager of the works for Mr. Rennie was named Knight, a clever, diligent young man, cut off by fever just after he had completed his labours. I descended into the coffer-dams, forty feet below the level of the river, into its very bed, where many antiquities were found.

The foundation is laid substantial enough to last thousands of years. The water pressure on the dams at high tide was immense. It is the best built of all the bridges. How little the public conceive of the principles and details of such scientific labours. The masses are soon to be brought to contemplate and comprehend everything, according to some dreamy people. This is contrary to nature and to experience. The depths of science to the end of time can only be fathomed by a scanty few. New railroads, more rapid than the present, electric telegraphs still more convenient, will only be understood by the masses as now in their universal language: "what per cent will they return?" With the multitude, God will ever temper the comprehension to the circumstances. I became an adept in pile-driving and coffer-dam making, in balancing arches, and striking curves, at least, theoretically. "We are going to place some of the largest granite stones, ever lifted so high in modern times, at each end of the bridge, to show the public how engineers can play with such heavy masses." "The public will not notice them, Mr. Knight," I replied; "of the hundred thousand that will pass the bridge every day, not more than a dozen will remark them at all. The surrounding objects are, also, upon a large comparative scale. A line-of-battle-ship looks small on the ocean. They will look at the vessels on the river, or upon the ground, thinking of the price of stocks, whether tallow is plenty, cotton up, or 'rice riz,' as Horace Smith has it."

"Why then I will pay a couple of men to stand and look at them, and the people will look too."

"Yes, Knight, they will stand and look too, and

seeing nothing unusual, go on again—it is the way of the multitude. Thousands never saw the solitary tree that stood in St. Paul's churchyard.”

“We must not be put out of conceit—we hope to surprize the public—it is likely enough, perhaps, to be as you say.”

Poor fellow, called off from his duties, zealously and efficiently performed, when about satisfactorily to repay his toils. “You will be surprised to learn that the last key stone of the last arch will be closed on the nineteenth instant, by the new Lord Mayor, Alderman Thompson, on which occasion there will be a little ceremony.” Such was his last note to me with an invitation. I feel proud to recal a name otherwise forgotten, of a practical son of science, who was the active superintendent of that noble erection.

A friend who differed from myself in politics, finding I was idle, asked me to assist him in organizing a daily evening paper, with the ultimate view of his being the editor. My task lasted but a few weeks, and he edited it, I cannot say for how long a period, before it changed hands. One morning my friend came to me and said :

“There is to be an outbreak of the working classes to-night all over London. Government has received certain intelligence of it. The guards have ball cartridge served out, and are kept in the barracks ready to be called upon.”

“Nonsense,” I replied, “London will never rest quieter than it will to-night. Some story of that long eared Alderman Atkins again, I suppose.” This sapient person had once alarmed the ministry with the account of a plot to burn London.

"It is no joke," he replied, "I am come from the Home Office. Peel was there; he and all are full of it. You must not let what I tell you transpire."

"Certainly not—but I will lay down my life the tale is false."

"How can you assert that?"

"My dear fellow, I am just come out of a large printer's office where I went to rectify a mistake in a proof which I recollected I had forgotten when I sent it back. That office is full of men, silent and busy. Now printers are reported to be among the most active on all tumultuous occasions. If such a rising were contemplated, there would not be half the complement of men at work. Printers are paid at bookwork by the quantity they complete, and if they absent themselves from their labour, it is at their own cost. A restlessness would be visible among those who chanced to be at work. Conspirators are always feverish just before the moment of action. The printer's work requires quite sufficient attention to prevent the mind from wandering, and if bent on mischief to-day, as a body, it is impossible they could be in a state of tranquillity, such as I have witnessed."

"There may be something in that, it is true—I confess I doubted the news, but the facts are as I have stated. I wish I could discover the truth."

On this I returned to the city, having an excuse for calling at two other establishments, I found nothing but business going forward, and not the slightest symptoms of what I was certain would show itself, if any mischief were contemplated. The Home Office had been hoaxed,

and the workmen calumniated. I went back to my friend and told him he might go and say to Sir Robert Peel that I would wager my life against such an outbreak, and state my reasons. He did so; nothing occurred. The want of moral courage in the ministers, the lack of a proper mode of ascertaining facts, and trusting to every fool's tale astonished me. Sir Robert Peel was too honourable to imitate the spy system of Lords Sidmouth and Castlereagh, and he was in consequence without any criterion for forming a correct judgment on the occasion. Yet he had better means of forming a judgment, even upon my plan of a ministry, of seeing for themselves. The public never became aware of this incident.

When the Whigs came into office, an ex-chancellor, now alive, accepted the chief baronship of Lord Brougham, who succeeded him. With the predetermined resolution to accept, he waited upon the Duke of Wellington to ask if he would advise with him whether he might consistently accept the offer. The duke, who saw through the affair in a moment, replied, some said to the noble lord personally, but others said afterwards, to one of his friends, "His" or "your lordship's is the only political character in England that can afford to do such a thing."*

A moment of idleness occurred, I was jaded with work, and went off into North Wales. I wished to form

* There was circulated at this time among the "wits," a parody upon one of Moore's Songs at which the Duke of Wellington chuckled immoderately—it would be cruel to repeat it here, for it was gall upon the ex-chancellor.

an idea of the mountain scenery there, and forget town for a moment. I travelled by Shrewsbury to Llangollen and Corwen, Bala, and Dolgelly. I scaled Cader Idris twice, once alone without a guide, directly up from Dolgelly, until arrested by the precipices near the summit. These I followed along the base, and reached a number of basaltic columns, passing what appeared a volcanic crater. After long toil, I attained the summit, where I found Pugh the guide, who would hardly credit what I had done. He told me no ascent had been made that way before. That the distances were very deceptive, and that a gentleman who had gone out by himself had been a night and two days there, and was nearly lost. I imagine he was one not accustomed to such scenes. I had a compass in my pocket by which I took all the bearings from where I set out. This would have been Greek to Pugh. The next day but one, a very esteemed friend and two ladies joined me at Dolgelly, and I ascended the mountain again with them. The view from the summit was exceedingly fine, over crag and purple-heathed mountain, with a noble expanse of sea. The day after I left my friends, I rose at 4 A.M., posted to Beddgelert through the pass of Aberglasslyn, twenty-seven miles. I then took a guide for Snowden, and walked between three and four miles to the foot of the mountain, ascended to the summit, three miles more, mounting among crags and frightful precipices, the "nightcap" off, (so they call the clouds in which the summit is generally concealed) this was fortunate. The scene was transcendently fine. The Wicklow mountains in Ireland were distinctly visible, and the Isle of Man, Anglesey, a map under the feet,

with its blue stripe of the Menai and the sea beyond. Snowden is a sublime mass of upheaved crags, as if shattered by earthquakes into its present form, and here and there are seen, surrounded by precipices, blue tarns, the mouths, thousands of ages ago, of so many active little volcanoes. The staff or pole placed by the engineers for the ordnance map, remained on the summit connecting the angles with Ireland. I descended rapidly, and returned to Beddgelert again on foot, by the same route I had gone over in the morning. I took a one horse car directly on my arrival, and reached the Anglesey Hotel, Caernarvon, a little after eight in the evening. There on the edge of the sea, though the weather was temperate, I felt exceedingly warm after the air of the mountain. I did not eat an ounce, though I had tasted nothing for so many hours. I slept little from the sensation of heat, but was able to get up at six the next day and explore the castle. The octagon room is really noble, but what a mere closet is the birth-place of Edward II. ! The statue of Edward I. after the storms of six hundred years, though it has lost its features, carries still about it a species of majesty, perhaps more from association with the past than the present reality. I returned to town by Bangor, viewing the Menai bridge in my way.

The Welsh are a primitive, hospitable, ignorant people. Very fine things are to be seen in the principality, but, as Peter Pindar said of the Hoe at Plymouth, the "comeatability" of the place destroys its beauty. It is too near home. I have found scenes in Wales, Cumberland, Derby, and the south-west of England, though not really in magnitude equal to those

I have seen abroad, yet the last standing mountains among mountains or rising from elevated vallies, and not being seen from the base to the summit, differ but little in appearance, especially as mountain lands deceive the eyes so much in regard to distance. Professor Wilson once asked me, "Did you ever see anything so beautiful as a Welsh valley? We have higher mountains in Scotland, fine scenery about the more beautiful English lakes, though the mountains are not quite as high as in Wales, but neither the north of England nor Scotland, no nor all Switzerland, can exhibit anything so tranquil, romantic, snug and beautiful as a Welsh valley. There is nothing like it I fully believe in the world." Wilson agreed with me, that of these, Dolgelly was one of the sweetest.

On returning to town, and speaking of the foregoing scenery to one of the school of Charles Lamb, his indifference to nature recalled that of his master. The map of Lamb's world, and that of his followers, extended from Hampstead to Camberwell, and from Brentford to Bow. They had heard, it was true, of other countries beyond those limits, which were the sojourn of the Troglodites whose heads grow beneath their shoulders, for all they knew or cared about them. Porter was their nectar; the tavern board or the book-cleared table in chambers, the fresh lobster, and the toasted cheese at supper, a little discourse on their own theories, amid the incense of the Indian weed, and they were in their element. Lamb had not seen the "wide" world. He cherished his circumscription, and he was right if he liked it best. He was a kind relative, a good but peculiar man. Like kings fond of low company, he had

no sympathetic rejoicings with wild wanderers. He was an original, radically of the city in his habits as well as literature. The Thames was his lake, not Balan or Derwentwater; the oozy beds of the coal lighters on the fragrant borders of their opaque waters bathed his spirit. He loved the place of his nativity, and the streets and dwellings that he had known so long. The dinginess of Fleet Street and the Temple was his precious verde antique. All this was natural, nor am I aware that he ever upbraided or envied those who expatiated more at large. His 'sect' died with him.

I found Campbell busy on the "Life of Mrs. Siddons" when I came back from Wales. His materials were scanty. It was the last year I saw the traces of the man as I knew him at first, not greatly altered—but altered he was in some degree. He had been changing from the time he left his residence in Upper Seymour Street. He had no companion at home, and going out into company, became more and more uncomfortable, appearing still desirous to brave all, and be as usual. Once or twice he said to me, "Why can't we be as we once were—why should things pass away so rapidly, and for ever?"

In faith he was unsettled, I have known few more so. I took leave of him and went down to Lancing with my papers. There I put together my "Book on Wines," the result of much labour. While there, too, I witnessed the effect of agrarian revenge, in outrages committed at that time too frequently. Five noble stacks of corn and hay were blazing together. The salt in the hay gave the glowing fire a singular appearance in a deep blue colour. The whole occurred

not a stone-throw from where I lodged. The portion of the summer I passed there in my laborious tranquillity, I look back upon with regretful recollections.

On my return to town, I found Campbell had only got through one volume of his labour. He had great difficulty in obtaining materials for his second, which proceeded slowly. We often met at dinner. I had got the start of him. My book was out and was exceedingly well received, considering its heavy price. A second edition followed. Then a third of five thousand copies, spiritedly got up by Mr. Bohn in a reduced size with additions. About the same time I brought up to a late date an edition of "Russell's History of Modern Europe."

Professor Wilson being in town, he dined with me. Campbell was to meet him. We waited some time for the poet who did not appear. I had a fear, from having been a little unwell, that the renowned Christopher might tempt me to take more wine than I ought to do, under the circumstances. Edinburgh in those days scorned thin potations. I knew when "the steam was up," I should not be able to calculate odds, and that Wilson and myself being only two in number were not likely to part without the chance of a head-ache, for one of us at least. My indisposition seemed to vanish as we proceeded. Wilson took port with his dinner, a custom peculiar to himself. I took white wine, and but little. Still fearing Wilson's fame with the whiskey people of the north, among whom he once told me he could manage a bottle at a sitting, and had seen a Highlander take two, I thought I would not take more wine, but have some rum punch made without

brandy, of which I was least afraid, calculating that Wilson would not touch that, and keep to wine. We should not then pass the bottle regularly. I was deceived. Wilson tasted my beverage, and thought it excellent. He joined me at once, and then I thought of the "whistle" of Burns. "Well, I will not mind it; I scarcely feel my indisposition, I must go on as if I had not been unwell at all," I said to myself. The "*Noctes Ambrosianæ*" had alarmed me. The Edinburgh Symposia in Blackwood's pages were formidable things. Even Sir Walter himself only took wine in the way of an amuzette, rather to cool than stimulate a stomach accustomed to corn alcohol of fifty-four degrees proof.

"There is excellent whiskey at hand—I never take it," I observed.

"That's all well in Edinburgh, I shall take your beverage here."

Wilson became as lively and entertaining as the very *Noctes* themselves. He filled his glass from the bowl, and kept me at the same pace. I felt my courage rise, as a sailor once told me his did in action, for there was no back-door to run out at. There was no one to "divert the fire" as military men say. I must fill glass and glass—so be it. I still felt coming across my mind to scare me, the words Christopher put into Hogg's mouth, "Gie me the real Glenlivet—such as Awmrose aye has in the hoose, and I weel believe that I could make drinkable toddy out o' sea water. The human mind never tires of Glenlivet, any mair than of caller air. If a body could just find out the exact proper porportion o' quantity that ought to be drank every day,

an keep to that, I verily trow that he might leeve for ever, without dying at a', and that doctors and kirk-yards would go out o' fashion."

Aye, "that exact proper proportion." The "Right and wrong Club" of the shepherd to wit; where the stalwart Edinburghians drank themselves into fevers!

"This is good," said Wilson, "and not very strong—how smooth it drinks."

"Do you wish a little more spirit added?" I queried most insincerely.

"O, no, it is excellent."

He became yet more pleasant but desultory—when was he otherwise? As usual there was a wild earnestness about him that I don't recollect ever seeing about any other man. He never set about a thing with only half a heart. His copious conversation never missed being amusing, and in his whims that way he was no respecter of persons or things. Sometimes when you imagined he was going into the depth of the argument, he flew away from it or stifled it in a jest. He surprised me by a request, which from some of the less noted literary heroes of the north, I should not have been surprised to receive. I regret to say that I have too often found it a besetting sin of Scotchmen that they express sentiments to the public, both in speaking and writing to which their real opinions are diametrically opposed. Campbell, in his better days, scorned this line of conduct; but, I fear, showed some instances of it in the later years of his life, though in trivial things. Wilson was a great sinner in this respect. I believe he was in his heart a thorough going liberal, yet

his sentiments in "Blackwood" are well known. On this occasion he pulled from his pocket a little volume of poems inscribed to Lord Brougham, called "The Village Curate."

"What do you want me to do with this?"

"It is an excellent little thing just make a mention of it for me in some work with which you are connected. It deserves a good notice. It is excellent, you will think so. It touches times."

"With all my heart; but why do you not give it a lift in 'Blackwood?'"

"No, that will hardly do—I dare not; read it, you will see why."

"But you are all powerful there."

"It would not suit their politics—'Blackwood' would fall into hysterics."

I did what he wished, and keep the book in his remembrance, for though I heard from him, I never saw him afterwards.

Campbell just then made his appearance. We were filling our glasses from the last drop of the bowl. The poet made an excuse about detention, and I ordered the bowl to be replenished, thinking Campbell would join us; but he would have brandy and water, Wilson trying to persuade him the punch was nectar. Wilson and myself, therefore, had the second bowl to ourselves. He declared it excellent, while my courage on the strength of the first braved all apprehension about the second. It is the most unlucky thing that men in advancing towards ebriety imbibe fresh confidence, while the wanderer near the verge of the precipice,

draws back in place of walking over. Wolcot well says of punch, it—

Smiles in his face as though it meant him bliss,
Then like an alligator drags him in.

Wilson now became more entertaining as Campbell, talking of the Poles, became more vituperative of Nicolas of Russia. Wilson, in badinage, took the emperor's part, and ran on at a great rate. Campbell, who was in earnest, seemed vexed at Wilson's playing upon the Poles, in his accustomed fashion. The former declared that the Polish children had been moved to the distant military colonies of Russia, torn away from their families to stock the new establishments, to be heard of by their friends no more. That the ties of nature were nothing in the sight of the Russian despot.

"My dear Campbell," said Wilson, "depend upon it all that is an error. The Slavonic is a very difficult language. Mistranslation of the newspapers, no doubt—all a blunder. Some cockney translator who was half drunk when he turned the account into English. It is my firm belief that in place of young Poles, we should read young pigs."

"It is no jest," returned the poet of Hope, "only fancy such an atrocity taking place here. What I have stated is a fact. I heard it just now at the Polish Committee."

"All partizans of the Poles there you know. They were not children but young pigs. The Slavonic may be translated either pigs or children, both are young,

a little carelessness, I dare say. Translations from these out of the way languages are often erroneous."

"There is no error: those Russians are terrible barbarians."

"It is all a mistranslation, depend upon it."

Campbell was silent not seeming to admit a jest in the affair. He would not laugh at what he thought a serious thing, nor take open offence at Wilson's jesting with him. He did not feel much at ease, sipping his brandy and water awkwardly, and appearing as if he wished himself away; while Wilson, whom the punch seemed to have excited, every now and then reverted to Poland in a jocular manner. Campbell did not repeat his glass, but rose and wished us good-night. The renowned Christopher and myself were now far in our second bowl. I did not feel myself at all affected, while Wilson less accustomed, perhaps, to that beverage than one manufactured with whiskey, was evidently exhilarated. I find that sometimes neither wine nor spirits will exhilarate me, and only a severe headache has been the consequence of exceeding but a moderate allowance, while at another time a very little, comparatively, will easily affect me. We were drawing near the bottom of the second bowl, chatting on all sorts of subjects, when a mutual friend made his appearance. On this I proposed coffee, ordering it at once. Soon afterwards we parted. Mr. W——, who had just come in, agreeing to walk with Wilson to the Union Hotel. The latter was evidently much exhilarated. I was bold, and insisted on a stirrup-glass at parting.

Nothing will convince me that the Professor of Moral

Philosophy, Hogg, Lockhart, and with Scott himself, were not sufferers from the mode in which they lived. Company and good fellowship, whisky toddy night after night, could not but affect men of studious pursuits in the end. Hogg confessed having drunk himself this way into a fever, though he had been bred in a hardy manner. The Scotch drink harder than the English or Irish. In England I have observed sturdy Scotchmen fall into an atrophy in a manner unaccountable, who were never observed to be inebriated. The truth was, that day after day they touched the verge of inebriety with their potent corn-spirit, and thus descended to the grave with that apparent sobriety which people quote to characterize their morality. A few years ago the spirit consumption of all kinds was for Scotland, more than that for England or Ireland per head. Hardy as Hogg had been bred, he died at sixty-three, Scott at sixty-one, Wilson at sixty-eight, the latter a long while before his departure, greatly changed in appearance. Scott's death may have been hastened by his labours it is true, but both he and Wilson were men of much corporal strength.

Wilson's cheerful constitution and spirit, boisterous, overflowing at times to wildness, and leaping all bounds, are depicted in the very style and lack-principle of the "Noctes." He would say and publish things regarding his best friends which were personal and annoying. They would write and remonstrate, often out of temper, and he would laugh at them, and explain it away in his peculiar mode. As to offending him by retorting it was impossible. He would have his sport though it were horse-play to others. I heard of many doings in

Edinburgh, where Englishmen fancy all is morality and decorum, because the exterior is well kept, which would startle the Southrons. Campbell who would let no one abuse the Scotch Athens, but himself, used to confess the care with which all sorts of sins there were kept out of sight of the world, and "was it not right it should be so!"

"Yes," I would reply, "did it not raise a false opinion of your virtues; let us have the truth where we can."

Thomas Pringle had a stock of narratives of the doings of the Edinburgh folks, which he would sometimes relate, unconsciously showing how far profession and practice were apart in the capital of the Land o'Cakes, which would fain be deemed that of transcendental propriety. I remember one scene he described where Wilson, Lockhart, and a number of wild men were met, and something being said about christening, Wilson proposed to christen a cat instantler, and went through the entire ceremony, as I presume in the Scotch mode, with a spirit of parody of the most comic kind, nothing being too extravagant, or too whimsical for him to undertake. Attractive you scarcely knew why, rich in knowledge, derived from the world as well as books, diffuse, inaccurate, by throwing his whole soul into his outpourings, his conversation became irresistably captivating. He toyed with his pen rather than wrote in seriousness, so that at times it seemed doubtful whether he was in earnest about anything, until what he wrote was reperused. He would not have succeeded at the bar, to which he had once thought of going; he was too eccentric. The

tautology and technicality of the law would have been his stumbling block. He was as he was to be, an original from nature's own hand, full of fancy, feeling, eloquence, and a power of expression great but irregular. I believe he was not one of very fixed principles, literary or political, from his advocating any side of a question to suit the occasion. A delightful companion, he would sometimes offend by his vivacious hits, declare all he had said a joke, and ask his butt to dinner the next day. We were never near enough to be on a footing of great familiarity, as it was I ever found him most friendly, and I never judged men's hearts by their political creed. His manners were easy, but his air was not gentlemanly. With his tall athletic form, his lower limbs were more than usually developed, and muscular. His features were not patrician, nor striking, except the chin, the rest was common. The whole countenance singular and intellectual, not on the whole handsome, the entire expression speaking something of his natural wildness, and fitful studiousness, his frolic and sobriety, as it varied in conversation. He was candour itself in all he said, wholly divested of pretension, delightfully unaffected. In his moments of hilarity, a dissertation on boxing, a point of metaphysics, a bit of classical criticism, and a poetical sentiment would follow each other linked in a singular connection. Yet it was often provoking to find, in the midst of a conversation on a subject highly interesting, dazzling with poetical glory, and rich in illustration, the whole suddenly broken off by the intervention of a comparative triviality, flinging you at once from the Line to the Arctic. His mind was rude with nature's lore. He was never tired of the

country. Talking to him about residing there, he told me he was forced to leave his place at Ellery. The truth was, Wilson could not live without society, and all his guests and projects for rural enjoyment were expensive: yet he had originally inherited a fortune adequate to any reasonable purpose. Wilson seemed to me at fifty, what I was at twenty-five, but then his age came too rapidly upon him.

Lockhart, too, has passed off the stage of existence. He had many sins heaped upon his shoulders which I believe he did not deserve. Differing in politics, they were never, of course, subjects of our conversation, but in everything that took place, during an intercourse of some years, I had no complaint to make of his want of courtesy or kindness. He was fond of mischief when a young man, and no one liked better a little mystification, but he was in full manhood when I knew him. He was of a retiring, reserved habit, and by many not understood, called ill-natured, sarcastic, and I know not what besides. I can only speak of men as I have found them, and with me he was always pleasant and gentlemanly. On setting out in life with Wilson by his side, whose irregularities were always marked by some countervailing amends, Lockhart had not the same makeweights. The devilries of "the professor," as I called him, "of mental philosophy," were many of them shared by Lockhart. I knew the last only in London, where he did not mingle largely in society, even among his own political class. Then his appearance and carriage, though intellectual and gentlemanly, had nothing winning about them. Pale of complexion, saturnine, with jet black hair, and deep dark eyes, thin

lips, and an outline of face somewhat attenuated, a cold expression, and retiring manner in company, except upon rare occasions, these gave a peculiarity to his character, which bespoke nothing of the talents he undoubtedly possessed. He had no warmth of soul in his address. An habitual cast, as of pensiveness, appeared continually over him, taken by some for mental abstraction, than which nothing could be more erroneous. As editor of the "Quarterly," he never had fair play. There were several shackles over Lockhart in his editorship, regarding some of which he did not hesitate to express his feeling to his friends.

CHAPTER III.

AN incident occurred on seeing the sudden death of a lady in the newspapers, to which it may not be amiss to make allusion. Just three years before, I had been on the sea-coast, and walking out one morning, a beautiful child, a boy four or five years old, ran up to where I was cogitating on a steep bank. A few yards further led down to the water, into which he would have speedily plunged had I not caught him in my arms. While I held him, a well-dressed servant girl came up, and in breathless haste took the child, thanking me for what I had done; the little fellow having strayed away from her, while she thought he was close at hand. I mentioned that I had caught him at a critical moment. She again thanked me, and they went their way. Soon after, during my walk, I met them accompanied by a lady of considerable personal attractions. The girl had evidently told her mistress of my having saved the child from a ducking, at least, if not drowning. The mother, still somewhat excited, thanked me with emotion, evidently arising from maternal affection, the tears standing in her eyes.

There was an air of deep melancholy over her very handsome features, and an expression of sweet womanly softness. That lady left the coast in a day or two afterwards, and I thought no more of the incident. Spending a week there in the following season, I saw the same lady pass the strand in front of my lodgings. I met her again and bowed. Her child and a different servant were with her. She looked thinner, as if she had been ill, and there was a deeper cast of sadness over her features. I should have thought no more about her and her child, had I not mentioned the incident to the landlady where I was staying, a kind motherly woman. She at once replied, "Yes, poor soul, she once lodged here, and did nothing but cry. Her story is a sad one. She has been a lovely creature, and is yet in her prime, but she is broken-hearted. I do not know, for my part, of what some men are made. I had her story not from herself, but her servant, for she never spoke of herself to anybody, but only of her child. She had twelve hundred a-year in land, and a good deal of ready money. Her mother persuaded her to marry a sporting, fox-hunting gentleman, who had no affection for her, only her money. The child you saw is her son, born in the first year of their marriage. Even before the child was born, her husband began to treat her with great coldness. Horses and grooms occupied all his time. She dined alone five days out of six, three months after her marriage, and after she lay in of her son, her husband never returned to her bed, and that is between four and five years ago. 'Yes,' or 'no,' is all the conversation they have together, as husband and wife; or, perhaps, some trifling question after he has

taken wine. She has never given him cause of offence. She grieves so, that I know it will kill her in the end. She wanted to know if she could not live separate, but the lawyers told her she must apply for a restitution of conjugal rights, and she said she would die before do such a thing, and from one too who hated her. Then her child would be taken from her, and barbarity added to injustice, the thought of losing her child alone reconciled her to her miserable state—to bear in silence her wounded pride, and resign herself to the contempt with which she is treated, it is breaking her heart. She had the command of servants and of her son, and wanted nothing, but these were the fruit of her own money. That which, before all, a woman had a right to expect, the attention of him to whom she had given her liberty, property, all that was dear to her in the world, that was not hers. She used to sit here for hours together, her eyes full of tears, looking at her child, and then she would sigh till her heart, I thought, would give way. Was it not a cruel state to be in?"

"Was there no reason for her husband's conduct?"

"He never made any complaint of her. Marriage was a novelty over in a month or two, and his mind on pleasure never ran above his stable, where it had always been before, I believe that is the sense of it. As to his wife, or any other woman, he cares nothing about them. Her servant said that one day she told her she would fly beyond the seas were it not for her child, that she should covet death before all things if her child could die too. In such a mood at times," the good landlady said, "she feared her brain might urge her to self-destruction."

A few weeks afterwards the decease of this poor lady was announced, with the "suddenly" attached to it, in the papers, a mode often adopted where there is a little influence, to conceal a voluntary death!

The husband may yet live, I believe he does live, his conscience unwounded, his debasing pleasures still pursued, taking his glass, or mounting his hunter upon the fortune attained by such a living sacrifice. There must be retributive justice somewhere. What mental torture could be more keen than that innocent, plundered lady sustained, dying by inches, a mind, worse than the grave-worm, preying on the living body, wasting into death in such a manner. Then the low, vulgar, mean, spirit that could unscathed, continue to riot on the property obtained by making a lovely woman miserable! When I see some cases reported in the papers, I think of Mrs. E——, sacrificed as I have related.

There was never an instance within my recollection, that a man who ill-treated a female was otherwise than a bully or poltroon. The habit of speaking slightly of any woman too, if not of the most virtuous, provided she do not wear a bold front and place herself in the way of the public, which has, in such notorious cases, a perfect right to animadvert upon what is so unbecoming, is mean and cowardly, perhaps more so in proportion to the defenceless state of the abused. How disgraceful it is to hear men boast of the favours of women untruly, and as a French writer remarks of a countryman, valuing his boastings higher than the smiles of the lady themselves if he had ever obtained them. But the slander of virtuous women out of malice is a most detestable vice, when we reflect on the difficulty of healing the

purest reputation in the face of an ill-natured world. There are some men who make their wives distasteful by indifference, and then cannot speak too ill of them. I remember a man named Stephens, who behaved in this way. He gave himself up to the grossest vices, and was drowned crossing King Harry passage. He wrote on his deceased wife, just before his own death, the following lines :

“Woman thou worst of all church plagues—farewell !
Bad at the best, and at the worst a hell—
Thou apple-eating traitor that began
The wrath of heaven, the misery of man—
Thou truss of wormwood, bitter leaf of strife,
Farewell ! church juggler that enslaved my life,
Bless'd be the hour that rid me of a wife :
If e'er a woman is again my guest,
All hell shall say amen, and Satan be the priest !”

The poor wife knew not of the insult. He thought he had written her epitaph, little foreseeing his own fate so soon afterwards ; but he did live to receive from the hands of one of her female friends, the following rejoinder :

“Go to thy prince, thou vilest son of earth,
And ask what demon claim'd thee at thy birth,
Supplied thy cravings, nursed thee through his power,
And acts thy guardian to the present hour,
Taught thee to hate the sex thou should'st adore,
And blast the fame of her who is no more—
Whose life how good, how virtuous all can tell,
Though fortune link'd her to an imp of hell !”

Women haters always appear to me among cast-away souls. I do not remember whereabout Quevedo places them in the lower regions, perhaps with the class

he makes one of the devils tell Pluto are so worthless, even in his infernal domains, that they do not pay for the trouble of burning them.

It is an error, as far as I have observed, to suppose woman fond of rakes and blusterers because they are such. She has a liking for suavity and softness, alternating with some violence of spirit, or rather fervency of feeling with sincerity. When rakes and swaggerers succeed, it is because women are deceived, mistaking falsified passion for that which is true. She loves an extreme sometimes, because she supposes an extreme will be returned in the one case as the other, and she expects it in affection, and that she shall have no difficulty in retaining it. Attention and undeviating politeness in company, and these more pointedly shown when alone, will succeed better than fervency before others, because not one man in a thousand knows how to treat a sensible woman with delicate warmth. When she is grossly flattered before others, the *gaucherie* attracts a ridicule seldom pardoned.

The Reform Act had emancipated Bath, a city of nearly forty thousand inhabitants; the members had been returned by thirty persons. There were in the city several newspapers, one high Tory in politics, another old Whig, a third anythingarian, and a fourth indescribable. It was sought to have one in the free trade or reform or radical interest, whichever people chose to call it; to be edited by a hand not having local predilections, and thus more likely to be independent. Messrs. Palmer and Roebuck were the members first returned, and they were still the choice of the electors. The people of all political opinions were courteous to each other, however

small their real stock of mutual affection. This amenity of manners was pleasant, as there was no coarseness on any side. I was prevailed upon to go and fight the battle, and throughout the city, much curiosity prevailed. I had scarcely sounded the tocsin before some of my opponents were curious to have a personal knowledge of me. In Bath, as in London, even resident inhabitants generally did not seem to know each other. "You will have a card to the mayor's dinner," whispered a friend; "and there are a number of our opponents who contemplate looking out for you there, perhaps to quiz, and I know not what." I did not mind being alone amid the hosts of Phillistia, though the dinner card was personal, and not to an "editor." I determined to go and to foil those who were so curious about knowing me. I dressed, and then drove so early to the Guild-hall, that I knew the mayor and a few aldermen only would be waiting in the reception-room; and, my name being duly announced, a dozen officials, and no more, would hear it. I could then fall into the ranks among the company, during the other receptions, and be unnoticed. It happened, accordingly, only that, when I was not far from the Hall, I saw the bishop's carriage coming; I, therefore, bade the driver set me down before the bishop. I entered—was announced; but had scarcely bowed to the mayor, before the bishop came and took up the attention of all the corporation, few persons having arrived; and thus my stratagem succeeded. The next day the curious people said they could not find me out among the two or three hundred who dined.

The war I waged was warm. On the day of publication, our opponents, who had no idea how independent

I should be of their notions, used to ask at libraries and news-rooms whether "the Reading sauce was yet to be had?" I found this beautiful city, so truly English in character, as to be divided into classes. Even tradesmen had their grades. A grocer sold aristocratical tea, there his brother, set at his ban, rejoiced in radical coffee, while a third proffered to his friends prime Tory treacle and sugar-candy. My diatribes were naturally stark heresies. I believe there were some thought me extremely presumptive when I wrote dialogues between the "Parsons and the jackdaws in the Abbey Tower," and that I was bringing the church into contempt. It is true, people did expect something more from me than the milk and water in which the other papers had been baptized; but then some of my squibs were voted too bad, for they could not see that time will ring its changes. Then the clergy were by far the larger part of them of Dr. Copplestone's notion, that "received opinions" are not to be questioned. "Why could I not leave well alone?"

I found some officers and others here whom I had known at Plymouth during the last war, and we were happy to recognize each other. In the election, after the dissolution in 1834, the city was contested; but Palmer and Roebuck were returned. I was on the hustings in Sidney Gardens, talking to General Palmer, when their opponent appeared. Roebuck gave him the most flattering praise, as a man, that he could bestow, in order to make the dressing he gave him, as a politician, more effective. During his speech, General Palmer nudged me repeatedly. "I could not say that for the world; how hard he is upon the Colonel (Daubeny). That is a blow—I could not strike him so

hard for anything." But the General had neither the eloquence nor boldness of Roebuck, though no favour from the court ever made Palmer give a vote against the popular side. The mistake of the Tory party was, that it applied the old practices of the former state of things to the new. It had no idea any thing should rule out of the mongrel state, called in England, "respectability," which meant their own class, but, in sense, signified nothing. Captain Sabretash, on half pay, Dr. Mc'Squirt, and Mr. Latitat, were respectable props of the constitution, before the Reform Act, and must, therefore, remain so after. Colonel Daubeney and his friends came to the hustings in a long procession, two and two. He was an amiable man, and, as Lady Wallace once described a gentleman, "gilt, but not lettered." Pretension was put in place of fact, and an ignorance of all political duties supplanted a development of principles. There was no bribery on any side. I remarked to General Palmer, who spoke of it in praise of the voters, that all was yet new to them, they were in a state of paradisaical innocence. The serpent had not yet given them a taste of the tree of knowledge. From what I have heard since, they are expelled their paradise, and are become "no better than the wicked;" they have had a taste of the forbidden fruit; and election "expences" follow there as well as elsewhere. Here then I stood where, nearly thirty years before I had entered in the heyday of youth, where I had seen Pitt, Melville, and Sir John Moore, now historical shadows.

Mr. Roebuck had two pre-eminent virtues. I have a right to form some opinion on the subject, after twenty years observation of his character. These virtues

are sincerity and an inflexibility of temper, which last seems sometimes not to yield sufficiently to changes of circumstance. I do not believe a more sincere man breathes. His views were not, perhaps, in the time to which I allude, so much the deductions of experience, as at present. He had then, perhaps, too high an opinion of all the world. Time has imparted to him a degree of experience, which chastens his ideas, and tempers his asperities, without diminishing their effect. His ardour, unabated, is directed with more judgment—a natural effect, but one not always observable in strong-minded politicians. His undeviating integrity, secures him that attention in the House of Commons which belongs to a union of that virtue with great moral power, and somewhat of impracticability. If he supported or opposed a ministerial measure, it was always conscientiously, and not from party or factious motives. He represented the nation—the whole people—not a section of agriculturists, or railway-jobbers, or city usurers. His vision ever looked over the whole field of action—over what he thought—for the advantage of all. The time was not long that I was among a constituency, that has since treated him with neglect; nor is it among the least pleasing of my reflections, that, in redeeming my promise, to combat obsolete prejudices, and support principles, I had more than once the grateful acknowledgments of the honorable gentleman.

The Rev. Mr. Liddiard, who had been chaplain to the Duke of Richmond, in Ireland, I met here, an old acquaintance, who has ceased to be of the living—a most liberal and excellent man. He introduced me to Mr. Oakley, of Tan-y-Bwlch and Festiniog, but my ac-

quaintance was short, for Mr. Oakley was cut off by cholera within a week afterwards. The Rev. Mr. Mangles, a clergyman of an excellent literary taste, who died recently at a very advanced age, was another acquaintance. I never knew his political creed—down upon him who makes his estimate of the man by his creed. He confined himself to the peaceful and heart-filling enjoyment which literature seldom fails to bring to independence of circumstances—would it were so to all those who meddle with it! The rest of the clergy were neutral, or in violent opposition—the case with the large majority, who, it might be imagined, would, as men of education, cling to reason and principle, in place of mental narrowness and doctrines adverse to civil freedom. There was a dissenting clergyman, whose conduct I cannot forget, being truly Christian and worthy of himself. The Rev. Mr. Jay, a well-known name, had, for the first time in his life, introduced politics into a sermon. I did not hesitate to notice and reprove it—I hope not too violently. On the following Sunday, he apologized to his congregation for the remarks he had made, and cast blame upon himself in a mode so honest and truly Christian, that I almost felt sorry I had not let his comments pass; but then I should not have had his virtuous recantation. His discourses were marked by earnestness, simplicity, and perspicuity of style. He had nothing lofty; none of the scholastic finish of Robert Hall; but he was, perhaps, on that account more extensively useful in his day.

In a cathedral town we never expect to find the best preachers of the established clergy. There is always an atmosphere of ease hovering over the pinnacles of the

venerable towers, which speak of holy idleness in the temple, where oblations are offered more immediately under the ken of the high priest of the diocese. The most effective sermons must be sought in the clergy who sustain the credit of the church among the people, rather in the churches and chapels distant from the cathedral "altars." The beautiful church of Bath, so light, so airy, such a contrast to the miserable modern Gothic, which, in many cases, deforms the streets of the metropolis, it used to be my delight to contemplate in the early mornings of summer. Often have I stood and looked upon it when the sun's early rays illumined the interior through those lightly-traced windows, contrasted with the deep shadows near the angles, and throwing out the finer portions of the architecture; the air fresh and balmy, and the city silent in slumber as the Egyptians in the catacombs of Karnac. One morning in the week, I used to rise and go to see that all was right at the office, as early as four in the morning. The men worked all the night before publication. Even where there was not a necessity for watchfulness, there was anxiety. At such times, when all was breathing of new-born day, I have stood, like the last in a city of the dead, and looked upon the silly angels, who, with a pair of excellent wings each, were ascending and descending the ladder of Jacob—the descending with their heads downwards. Our fathers read their bibles too much for the duty of reading alone, not attending to anything more than the traditionary construction put upon their contents, else they would have remembered, that, in the days of Jacob, angels wore no wings, being no more than messengers. We are told this in Genesis; and

that they bore the aspect of young men. The Jews seem to have applied these appendages to messengers, after the captivity, or, at least, long after Jacob's days. The corporation of the city had been clearing away in good taste most of the crowded buildings around the church. I noticed that, in some places, the pavement stones were laid with mortar, on a stratum of human bones—all that remained of the stranger, and the citizen that for ages had peopled the place. The church is of the style of Henry VII.—the most beautiful of all the Gothic styles—the most airy, improved, and luxuriant, in the tracery. The reverence that fills the mind, before such a building in this more improved state, as to style, differs from the impression of the early Norman, and other heavy and gloomy erections. It is a proof of the bad taste of the present age, that the cheerful, light, pure taste of the times of Henry VII. is not more copied. Perhaps the modern tendency to the gloomiest things of the Roman faith, has some influence in the choice; and yet the modern Roman buildings are of a better kind. Oftentimes I reflected on the gay crowds that had thronged there to worship, and on the dissipated scenes that had occurred beneath those venerable towers, which I had read of in memoirs of fashionable individuals.

My avocation was but a weekly repetition of the same duty, diversified with trifles of local interest alone. There was a desire expressed by the printer to bring out a local almanac. If he waited to copy the calculations from one published in London, it would compete with the design in the local market. I told him I would do all I could for him. I made up from the nautical almanac all that related to the phenomena of the heavenly bodies,

except the times of the sun's rising and setting, in hours, minutes, and seconds. I knew only one way of working these out. The task seemed formidable. I actually worked out the results, with the logarithms for every day in the year. It cost me more than twenty days of my leisure time, and, in the working, about seven hundred sums. I knew no shorter way of computation. I made the people a present of my labour, of the extent or value of which, I imagine, they had no idea. This almanac was the first that appeared in England, for 1835. I was pleased that I had acquired a practical knowledge of something new to myself in these calculations, although I might never turn them to account.

I received a letter, while at Bath, from one Ashe, who called himself 'late a captain in the York Rangers.' He had suddenly made his appearance there, an unprincipled forger of books, such as "Travels in America," where he was charged with running away and carrying off a collection of mammoth bones, belonging to Dr. Goforth, a laborious collector. This book was no more than a compilation from different local guides. He had formerly published a fictitious work, regarding Queen Caroline, called "The Spirit of the Book," affecting to be the substance of that book which Spencer Percival drew up, in behalf of the Queen, and afterwards sacrificed, with his client, to court interests. He wrote false memoirs of living people, to get paid for their suppression. One of these, I remember, was "Memoirs of the Countess of Berkeley;" another was called "The Claustral Palace." It was unlucky for him that I knew his history, and that he was a notorious scoundrel, who had attempted, not long before, to victimise the Duke

of Cumberland, and to extort money from him. He abused the Mayor of Bath, who was a kind, gentlemanly man, and then wrote a most pathetic letter, wanting to have inserted in the paper an appeal to the public on his behalf. I refused, letting him know I was too well acquainted with his career. Two days after, I heard of his sudden decease. Among a mass of editorial papers, relating to the "New Monthly," I discovered a similar letter to that thus subsequently sent to me at Bath, dated from the Isle of Man, ten years before! I have these letters yet by me.

Thelwall, so long known to the public, from having been tried with Horne Tooke and Hardy, for high treason, came to Bath to lecture, while I was there, and was found dead in his bed. He was a consequential man, but had the merit of being politically consistent. He took pupils for the purpose of instructing them in elocution, with a view to qualify them for the senate, soon after I first came to London. Coleridge died at this period, the chief of the Lake school of verse, to my seeming, who sacrificed his eminent abilities to his love of conversation. His powers have not been overrated. He loved subtleties—a passion for which he seemed to have caught from the Germans, whose lives are spent in this kind of trifling. He found an analogy for everything started that was new to him, and into that speedily drew the novel topic, which then disappeared. What was clear to himself he could paint when he pleased, with great vividness. He was a dreamer, who found as much pleasure in the unsubstantial as in the real, but he wasted his powers. Of all the Lake School he was the least of an egotist; or not a hundredth part so magnificent

a professor as Southey, or, above all, Wordsworth, who approached self-deification in that respect. His conversation was rich with ideas—soap-bubbles, brilliant with colour, and sparkling with light, which flashed upon the vision a moment and vanished. I remember his play of “Remorse” acted. It had fine passages; but its author was too descriptive for the drama, not identifying himself with his characters. He was master of the tender and profound; and in criticism was more given to censure than praise everything out of the line of his own notion of the fitness of things. He jilted his own fame. He suffered severely during his last illness, which he sustained with equanimity and resignation. He displayed more of the warmth of passion, as a poet, than all the rest of the school, in which and in energy, they were ever exceedingly deficient. In person he was a heavy and full.

A singular circumstance occurred while I was at Bath, which terminated oddly. I had, in former days, been fond of the vicinity of Claverdon, and asking if the owner, a fellow countryman, resided there, I was told that he did not, that the house was let furnished, keeping the game and land in the hands of an agent. The house was then inhabited by a gentleman of high respectability and property, from the north of England, or somewhere in Scotland, Mr. Borthwick, of Borthwick Castle, who was a great friend of old Sir Bethel Codrington. The rent was four hundred a year, for which Sir Bethel was security. The gentleman had been recently elected M.P. for Evesham, where he had been supported by Sir Bethel. I had been intimate with some of the anti-slavery society in London, and knew

from them, as well as others, the history of one Peter Borthwick. It never crossed my mind that the M.P., for Evesham, could be the same adventurer at Bath, for the time seemed short to be the history of the man. Of him I knew, the father was the porter at the Dalkeith paper mills; his elder brother, then living, a private soldier, had been the waggoner, and his sister the servant girl, two or three years before. The Benjamin, of the porter's family, had received a tolerable education for his class; so that he knew a little Latin, and lived by travelling to farm-houses, instructing children at their homes. Nor was he without the feeling of life's spring-time, for he had made love to a domestic, considered his superior in life, and then forsaken her. All this time he and his family were humble members of the secession church, and it was said he aspired to be a minister at some future day, studying polemics for the purpose. At once, to the astonishment of the Dalkeith people, he opened a stationer's shop in the town—took the waggoner from the mills—made him head of the firm of J. and P. Borthwick, and elevated the sister to the rank of his housekeeper. Nobody could tell where the capital for such a purpose came from—manifold were the conjectures. In no great while after—about a year or so, I believe, the bubble burst—the creditors seized what remained of the goods, for the firm was not worth sequestration, or what is called bankruptcy here. The head of the house of J. and P. Borthwick entered as a private soldier; and the brother betook himself to Edinburgh, penniless. It was reported that the view of Borthwick, in this headlong scheme, was, that he might be deemed of consequence enough to marry a farmer's

daughter, who had two hundred pounds to her fortune. His next hegira towards greatness was a journey to Cambridge, having determined to embrace Church of England doctrines. Somehow he contrived to reach the University, and it was presumed, went to take Church of England orders, in due course. He brought a letter to a solicitor there, who complimented him with an invitation to his house—of which he did not fail to make good use. He kept the first term at college, and contrived to run up a large account, which, on being presented, he met with an acceptance. This, as it appeared to have but a few days to run, was taken, and the money difference given him; but the bill was not paid. He next got into prison; he had put on the character of a holy man, and wrote a lecture or treatise on the millenium. His gift of speech on matters of faith was peculiarly glib; and he moved the feelings of some low church persons so, that he was assisted out of prison, and imagined to be full of gratitude and piety. He then set off for town. Peter, not long after, was followed by a clergyman, who had interested himself about him in Cambridge, but who, on going to his own accustomed lodgings, found Peter comfortably occupied in them, though he had no introduction. On asking what he was doing, he replied he was writing a play. The reverend gentlemen was astounded. “He must do something for his family.” The excuse did not avail. He was discarded by those who had so essentially served him. He then went to the managers of the Tottenham-court Theatre, and offered himself to “hold forth” on the boards. He was tried at a rehearsal; and was at once dismissed. Self-determined, he went next to the

manager of the Surrey Theatre, and offered his cheap acceptance for fifty pounds to be permitted to play "Othello." As some gentlemen had whims of this kind, the manager consented. He blackened his face, and made the spectators delighted by one of the most taking tragi-comedies ever performed. The audience was convulsed with laughter; never was Othello so put to death before. A number of his interludes were related besides; but how he came to think of raising the wind by taking up the championship of the West India planters, did not appear. He became an itinerant orator on this subject, and there I first heard of him. He was remarkable principally for his pertinacity in meeting obvious facts, whenever it suited his purpose, by a plump denial of them. Some gentleman, on the side he advocated, stated that he had received, once or twice, a little assistance from the West India interest, but that it had ceased for some time. The last thing heard of him in town, about a year and a half before, as I remember, was, that he had left Liverpool—his letters, papers, trunk, and baby-clothes remaining for his lodgings. It was not likely I could imagine the Borthwick, thus a year or so before spoken of, was the M.P. for Evesham, paying four hundred a year for his residence. At the York-House Hotel his swagger, his "hasten horses for Mr. Borthwick," whenever he moved a few miles from his sojourn, could be the Dalkeith stationer. A service of plate too was presented to Mr. Borthwick, of Borthwick Castle, with his arms emblazoned upon it, and engraved copies circulated. The plate was presented for orations on the high church and anti-reform side.

I had with me, among some newspapers out of date, a "Tyne Mercury," in which the following paragraph met my eyes by accident: "Many people are asking who the member for Evesham is. There was a man named Borthwick, who was a secessionist minister, and who came out in Othello at the Victoria, though he was damned the first night—we wonder if it is the same person?" Thus the surprise was great in the north. The secession and low church, Cambridge, the theatre, the pro-slavery champion, and now high churchman, came into my mind, and led me to enquiries; I found Borthwick's supposed patron, Sir Bethel Codrington before mentioned, not a very bright man, but long connected with the West Indies, and most respectable in family. I reasoned, that though Sir Bethel was continually seen with the inhabitant of Claverdon, he would hardly supply his extravagant expences. His election costs, alone, were eight hundred pounds. I found that the former member, a liberal, had retired, because he would not pit his private fortune against the resources of the Carlton Club the year before. The mystery was now in my mind unravelled. My eyes were open to the whole affair. Borthwick was making use of honourable men, seeing their weak side; for his supporters were gentlemen of integrity, honourable if indiscriminating conservatives endeavouring to strengthen their party. They could not, did not think so ill of human nature as to presume upon the truth of what was ascribed to their champion by political opponents. Their own singleness of purpose and private integrity thus aided the deception. In their view, the orations of Peter were marvellously clever, and they would show that their party could

exhibit a new Demosthenes, and make the reformers own a master spirit in the House of Commons. I was at a loss about the individuality of the man, because the jump from penury to this affluence of expenditure was so extraordinary. He had told the electors at Evesham, that his exertions in the slavery affair had been made at his own cost, and that to a large amount. I was now convinced "this Mr. Jones must be that Mr. Jones." I obtained information, that the intelligence from Evesham reaching the north, had drawn up a creditor who got his money. I was presented with a list of the debts of the house of I. and P. Borthwick in Dalkeith, the aggregate about five hundred pounds.

Not long afterwards a report was spread that Mr. Borthwick of Borthwick Castle intended to propose himself for Bath, in case of a new election. He had just before, as reported in a Worcester paper, denied to the assembled constituency at Evesham, that he had ever been in trade. It was true he had once helped some friends, persons nearly connected with him. If Sir Walter Scott was involved in difficulties, it was no disgrace if other "honourable men" were to be in the same situation. If, in such a case, he gave his money to pay the debts of persons in distress—was he to be blamed? He had paid all their debts, although not liable at all! He never was a bookseller, paperseller, or any seller at all. He gave his name to persons with whom he was connected. He and his wife had spent much of their property in an act of kindness. He then denied he had ever anything to do with the secession church, and pledged his "honour, as a gentleman," that his statement was true.

On hearing that he was to contest Bath, were the rumour false or true, knowing what I did, I should have been blameable to remain silent. A paragraph I inserted, with two or three questions, drew some little attention. Suspicion seemed to be aroused among the party which had before supported him. He was forced to do something to justify himself, and he took an opportunity at a public meeting to boast that he would make the calumniator of his fair fame cry peccavi. His supporters insisted on his bringing an action to clear himself of the charge of false statements. He was now in a cleft stick. It required impudence ten times refined, to go on undauntedly to the last. "He treated with scorn," he said, "all the offscouring of the press said against him." The object of the "wretched creatures" was, "if possible, to be noticed in decent society," with much more that met with rapturous and loud cheers, and thumpings of the tables on the occasion by his friends. Zealous party men had not so low an opinion of human nature as the specimen of it before them warranted them in entertaining. He mistook his man. I did little more than reiterate my former queries, very harmless they were in themselves. Peter's friends now declared that he must purge his fair fame. Mr. E——, a solicitor, called upon me to say that Borthwick would bring an action, and test the truth of what I had advanced, but hinted that an apology would be accepted as long as it vindicated his honour.

I happened to be already acquainted with the legal gentleman, and after telling him, I acted for others as well, whom I must consult, I said:

"In a week I will give you a decided answer, if that will not injure your case."

"Not at all."

"I am going to run up to town where I can quickly learn all I want as a guide to my reply, and you shall hear instanter. I would make the most humble apology possible, if I had done your client the slightest wrong. I have only asked two or three simple questions. I know the use of the press, and also its abuse. No one can say I have written an ungentlemanly word about any political opponent here—I mean in relation to private character. There is a great public question involved in the present case. A representative in parliament ought to be known to his constituency."

"So then let the matter rest for a week," said Mr. E——, fully agreeing.

"Now let us have a word together without prejudice," I added. "Remember, without prejudice."

"Most assuredly."

"Do you believe honestly, Mr. E——, that your client is a gentleman, I mean in the common acceptation of the term? That is, do you believe he is what he represents himself?"

"I do, I assure you most solemnly. He has again and again affirmed to me that he is the individual he has publicly stated, a man of fortune, and was never a shopkeeper, or read for the secession church. I am convinced he is a man of high respectability. He will bring an action."

"He has no other choice, Mr. E——, if he is the character I mean—his supporters here are gentlemen,

differing in politics only. They *must* have the matter sifted."

"So you think, Mr. Redding."

"I am not without sources of information of which you are not aware. He has stated untruths openly before the country—it is a public duty on the part of his friends, for their own sakes, to discover whether they have been imposed upon or not."

We wished each other courteously good morning. I believe Mr. E—— was as much imposed upon as anybody else. I went up to town, made the enquiries I desired, returned and told Mr. E—— no apology could be made. The action proceeded. The plaintiff got the trial put off when the next assizes opened, paying the expences of the adverse witnesses, many of whom came all the way from Scotland. This was six months more breathing time, and, no doubt, a fresh pull upon the Carlton Club purse. Yet he had the audacity to tell his constituents that the postponement was with the defendants.

He omitted no opportunity of pushing himself into the houses of conservative gentlemen in Somersetshire, and one day called on a very opulent and respectable M.P. near Bristol. He was shown into the library, and there met unexpectedly, in a state of domestic service, the sister of the girl he had treated so ill in the north. It was no more than a recognition on both sides. The visitor moved away, and never made a second call at the same mansion. This I heard *sub rosa*. The persistence of the man in denying his shopkeeping connection, and that with the secession church, and in

affirming he had injured his fortune in advocating for the West India planters, made his identification necessary. His Evesham supporters believed he was a man of fortune and character. Lord Western, whom I knew, happened to be at Bath for his health. I met him, and told him of the infidelity of the Evesham electors, their disbelief even in letters from Scotland regarding him. His lordship drew up a form of petition to the House of Commons on the part of the electors of Evesham, adverse to the return, stating "that a trick had been practised upon them in the return of an individual who denied he was the person they took him to be, and praying the House to enquire into that fact, for which the courts of law could give them no redress. If the party so returned was not the person he represented himself, they humbly submitted that not a vote had been given to Mr. Borthwick, and that he was not elected by the free burgesses of Evesham."

The electors in opposition to Borthwick were afraid of the expense, and the measure was not adopted in consequence. It happened, however, that a young man who knew him in Dalkeith, was in Bath, a book and pamphlet Scotch agent. A dinner took place at Evesham on the election. We sent that man over to dine and recognize the member. He was suspected, or the emissary had let out his purpose, and was in consequence refused a ticket to the dinner. He then stationed himself near the door of the dining place, with true Scotch pertinacity. It grew late. A vehicle in waiting had long exceeded the time the hero of the day announced for his departure. The messenger kept to

his post. At length, his hat slouched down over his eyes, Borthwick came forth, turning his head aside—a friend on each side of him.

“That,” said the messenger, “is Peter Borthwick, late stationer of Dalkeith, I came here to identify him.”

The next morning, he went before the mayor of Evesham and made oath of the fact, and brought the affidavit to Bath.

I was not in Somersetshire, having left the county, when the trial came on at Wells. Witnesses, bankers and tradesmen from Scotland, professors from Cambridge, the jailer from the same place appeared, and Borthwick was shown in his true colours. There was a count given in his favour, all the rest were against him. It was one of importance, very easily proved by the reporter for any of the Worcester papers, namely, that of his denial of his identity “*before*” the libel charged. The proof of denial being tendered as “*afterwards*,” an evident oversight. The moral effect was the same, for that count they gave him damages. The other counts were sufficiently against him. Thus fell an orb of the first magnitude, whom the venerable baronet, it would appear, thought a second Cicero for the House of Commons. The “Morning Post,” I remember, gave a very amusing account of his débüt. Even stolid Evesham left him to new adventures at its next election. He was a man of many words upon polemical topics, with a front of brass, he knew nothing else, but spoke fluently on the subject of religion. I have given this affair at greater length than the subject is worth, but I was censured by some for the part I took in it, whereas both conservatives and liberals ought to have felt obliged

to me. In so large a city as Bath, it is wonderful the man's history was not detected before; his unscrupulousness and boasting sooner comprehended. It is true we are all credulous enough in serving the purposes of our own party. In the present case, it seemed like infatuation, that gentlemen in position, belonging to any party, should suffer themselves to be so deceived. Sir Bethel Codrington, it is true, was not a strong minded man, and it is possible his party relied upon his representations. Evesham, too, should be an example to constituencies in selecting their candidates according to the sense of the constitution, by learning something about those whom they aid in representing the interests and protecting the fortunes of the people of England, even if they disregard themselves.

CHAPTER IV.

IT is wonderful how in our "places of rest," as Bath and similar towns may be styled, persons living in easy circumstances exhibit so little increase of mental development. There is a less proportion of those in them who comprehend and enjoy mental pleasures than where the cares and turmoil of business press upon the busy occupants in manufacturing towns. Leisure abounds, the things of the mind might, in such localities, be considered most accessible, for time is not engrossed by labour, yet there we discover the greatest indifference to them. I do not allude to the visitants to watering places and spas, but to the fixed residents. Attempts were made, in vain, to carry on with success, a well edited magazine called the "Bath and Bristol." There was a large population in the two cities, it was well conducted, perhaps too well, for the generality of readers, but it had little success. It wanted more of cant and frivolity. The editor was a man of great moral worth, possessing many valuable acquirements. Judging from later works, and that class of literature which at first designed for the kitchen by penny sheet

speculators, has been found intellectual enough for the drawing-room, this neglect of what was good may be accounted for. The tendency of our literature had begun, even in the metropolis, to exhibit symptoms of decline, in what was most worthy its character at the time to which I allude.

I steamed across the Severn sea to observe some of the nearer scenery of South Wales, before I left the country. I visited Chepstow with its fine old castle, and the grave of Southey's hero, Martyn the regicide, which was in good condition. The scenery was charming. Piercefield, Tintern, the latter so extremely fine as a ruin, that no Catholic of taste could wish it restored. Its beauties were heightened by a thunder storm, which had a singularly fine effect among the coppice covered hills around. The Wye is unfortunately too inconsiderable a river. From Tintern, through the woods, I visited Ragland, made too much of a show place, and Carleon, with the Usk rolling pellucidly along—assuredly we do not lack anything in the way of ruin in combination with fine scenery in our own island, some of the Welsh castles vying with any to be seen elsewhere in picturesqueness. I returned by way of Newport, and down the Usk to the Severn sea, which I crossed to Bristol. The estuary of the Severn is much finer than that of the Thames. It was early morning when I crossed. A sea of vapour was alone visible. This speedily rolled away, forming those grand convolutions observed in certain light states of the atmosphere. The broad expanse of water glowed in the sun like molten gold. Not a ruffle disturbed the tranquil bosom of a river not in general too placid.

"The Severn swift, guilty of maiden's death," says Milton. I was sorry when the steamer navigated among the mudbanks at the mouth of the Avon, and the grey limestone on its shores warned me, passing through their singular cleft, that my voyage had terminated.

I am more and more convinced that to teach reading and writing will not make people think. The little power reason has over the majority will not be increased until instruction goes farther. The Bulls, originally said to be of Gloucester, one of our finer agricultural counties, are still extraordinarily obtuse. One day the clerk came to me with an advertisement, of which I bid him refuse the acceptance, against his notion, and that of too many a proprietary, of the benefit of receiving money whenever it can be obtained, as the first consideration of the press, as well as the butter shop. The case of Dove, executed for the murder of his wife, shows the influence which such *charletans* have upon stolid minds. The advertisement ran thus :

"One thousand pounds will be paid by the Gloucestershire astronomical, mathematical, and astrological society, to any person proving that the genuine principles of the science of astrology, by which nativities are calculated mathematically, are not founded in eternal truth, by applying to " (here I suppress the name) " Stroudwater, Gloucestershire.

"N.B. Nativities calculated by questions resolved mathematically, also talismans, &c., &c., prepared by — as usual, according to advertisements and bills, a copy of which is in the papers, with the exception of his residence, which is Stroudwater, and the £500

reward for a disproof of the science of astrology. Any person may find the above science treated on at some length, in the 'Gloucestershire Journal,' March 15, by ——".

Some divines will agree with this conjurer in his mode of demonstration, for he, too, had recourse to happy *non sequiturs* to prove his statement. "Astrological coincidence. Mr. Spear of Hammersmith, and Mr. Hemmings of St. Martin's parish, London, were both born nearly at the same time, and very nearly the same place as George III. They both went into business when the king was crowned, and married the same day as did his majesty. In the London papers for 1820, these facts are recorded by men who show their enmity to astrology on every occasion, they are not, therefore, fabricated."

This conjurer, I was told, saved money. Education must go farther, or the good expected will not follow, and real genius will be quashed beneath the fiat of conceited mediocrity.

When I was at Plymouth during the last war, I became acquainted with a pleasant country gentleman, Colonel Houlton, who commanded one of the Somerset regiments of militia, at the mess of which I had frequently dined. He was the owner of Farleigh Castle, an old seat of the Hungerfords. The chapel alone was entire, the tombs in excellent preservation, and still so kept by the colonel. Some of the bodies of members of the renowned Hungerford family were entire, pickled in their metal coffins. This mode of preserving bone and integument from becoming chalk and gas, shows that down to a late period our imitation of the

Egyptians was clumsy. The tomb of Sir Thomas and Lady Hungerford are exceedingly good, both in effect and execution.

I visited Pen Park Hole, now partially covered over, a perpendicular opening in limestone rock, gloomy and deep. Here a young clergyman came with his intended bride some years ago, and attempting to look down the dark profound, toppled in. Miners were procured, who descended and discovered the body at the bottom. The abyss was found to take the form of a horse shoe.

A solitary walk of mine was to Charlecombe, under Lansdowne, a sweet seclusion from the busy world. Few visit that little church with its square turret, its small limpid brook, and its large solitary yew. What a spot for a poet's grave! It is not a place to pic-nic with a party, one companion is enough. I had with me once a rotund son of the church, who relished a good dinner more than the picturesque, and I verily believe died of good eating, like the D.D. of Cambridge. "who went to his grave with five fine mackerel large and full of roe, eat all at one dinner, and finished by a turbot the day after, of which he left only the bones." There was an old sun dial here. A church should always have one. When I was a boy, I marked the shadow of noon on the opposite wall, and used to note its movement while at my book, impatient for twelve o'clock and liberty, I believe this made me ever after fond of sun dials. I bought a portable one which I fix with a compass wherever I live, and often waste time in looking at its shadow. A house in the country is nothing without a dial. The shadow makes us see that our orb is in motion. The dial, too, links us with

antiquity, for they had dials in the early ages of the world. The moving line, the lapse of the hours, the association with the terrene circuit, the bosom question, "how many future revolutions of this circle remain for me?" come seriously upon the mind. Mottoes on dials are curious. One in Italy, I remember, is pretty. *Hora, dies, et vita fugiunt manet unica virtus.** Another ran :

"Once at a potent leader's voice I stayed,
Once I went back when a good monarch prayed,
Mortals, howe'er we grieve, howe'er deplore,
The flying shadow will return no more!"

I had now sojourned in Bath, for the first time since I had changed the generosity of youth for the cares of manhood. I hoped to fix myself there, rather than in London; but there is no constancy in life. What changes had happened since the monuments of Quin, Draper, and others, had made me think of their doings in the world, and I had first seen Anstey's grave, in which he had been placed a month or two before! There was more gratification to me in looking at the spot consecrated by genius—the precious gift of heaven to man—than in all the pomp of the courts, and all the parade of the kings I had seen since I last stood on the same spot—when life was novel to me, unused to the sight of kings and pageants, and when the wonders of the many were my marvels as well as theirs.

* Hours, days, life flies, virtue alone remains.

CHAPTER V.

BEFORE I quitted Bath, I expressed a wish to see the tower of Mr. Beckford, who had once been considered the richest subject in England. It stood upon a spur of Lansdowne, over the city. Upon his architect mentioning my wish to its owner, he was desired to request me to fix my own day, and he would send his carriage for me. If I would leave that at the tower-entrance, and walk down through the grounds to his house, a distance of less than a mile, he would be happy to show me his curiosities in Lansdowne Crescent. The offer of the carriage arose from the steep ascent that must necessarily be passed over to attain the summit, nearly eight hundred feet above the Avon. I detailed some of the incidents respecting this tower in the "New Monthly Magazine," and very soon afterward this was followed by an article called the "Tower of the Caliph," in which I described the gardens and grounds as they appeared at that time. Only a small part of the owner's books and articles of *vertu* were in the tower—the latter being under the care of "old Vincent," the gardener, who had planted Fonthill in his youth. The day was propitious ; and the sun shone warmly. I found the entrance

to the enchanted place open, and the gardener ready to receive me, when we were joined by the able architect of the building. Every door was thrown open; every cabinet unlocked. It was a place of enchantment, enriched with treasures of art, and choice editions of books. Sculpture and painting lent every aid to furnish mental food, amid a tranquillity admirably suited to enhance their enjoyment. I opened a number of volumes in beautiful condition. I examined the pictures, among which were some, now in the National Gallery, but there would not be time in a week to look into everything. I was also anxious to visit the owner, who had lived for many years secluded, except to a few friends. In Bath, I had seen him on horseback with the Duke of Hamilton, when taking an airing, and passing through the city. There, though he lived so long, nobody knew anything about him. The master of the ceremonies, one or two artists, and the workmen, of whom he always employed a number, were alone conversant with him. The strangest and most absurd stories were circulated regarding one of the simplest men in manners, and habits, of the existing day—but I break the chain of narration—I found a great variety of foreign trees and shrubs in the tower plantation, which were not sufficiently old to give much shade to the lower part of the building.

The tower itself, above a hundred feet high, was crowned with a model of the Temple of Lysicrates, at Athens, made of cast iron. Under this, was a square room, each side lighted with three arched-windows, of plate glass. The main-entrance, in ascending two or three steps, led into a narrow apartment, or sort of en-

trance-hall, and, facing it, a plate-glass door, conducted to the tower. In this entrance-hall was a noble pillar-table of Sienna marble, in a recess, bearing three of the oldest class of Etruscan vases. The ceiling borders were wainscot, with gilt cornices. Glazed cabinets, on either hand, bore a number of rare and costly articles, which I had no time to examine. There were relics from Herculaneum, and purchases from Strawberry Hill; there were beautiful bird paintings and landscapes, with bronzes and vases of exquisite form, in rooms in which crimson and black, and scarlet and purple predominated. Here was the companion to the Doge of Venice, Vendramini, by Bellini; Canalettis; a gem of Domenichino; Patels and Cuyps, now in the National Gallery; and fine Brühals; magazine coffers, Florentine mosaics, Arabesque candlesticks from the Alhambra; one pair of candlesticks of pure gold, after a design of Holbein; a fine bronze of John of Bologna; and sculptures, by Farnesini—all in the same room. There was a beautiful oratory, too, with a statue of St. Anthony, and a small, well-selected library. It would take a long time to describe accurately the rare and costly things in this gem of a building. I ascended carpetted stairs to the summit, and enjoyed one of the noblest prospects in the kingdom. I hurried myself through, although I had ample time—my mind still running upon the owner of all these tasteful things—"What sort of man should I find him?" The servants, sent there for the occasion, were told that we should proceed afterwards to the house; the architect and gardener conducting me first over the grounds. There I saw the sarcophagus in which the owner now reposes, cut in a single block of

red granite, placed among the shrubs and trees ; and at some little distance was a monument, in white marble, to the memory of a favourite dog. I descended through grounds most tastefully disposed, for the distance of a mile. Here was a rough, uneven surface, crossed by a winding-path, that led into and through grottoes, or plunged the stranger into verdant shrubberies, acres of roses, groves, with retired seats, and small ponds of cool, refreshing water. There, wild as in the woods, grew pendant honeysuckle, whole bushes of sweet briar ; the appearance of art carefully avoided in all. Almost every species of the pine genus was found here ; some had been imported from the Himalaya and Mexico. All was tranquil—all in soothing repose—friendly to meditation. Nor were Italianized buildings wanting, nor sweet-smelling herbs, as thyme and marjoram, planted irregularly, their perfume discovering them more readily than the vision. The birds, which were never suffered to be disturbed, poured forth their melody in the richest notes they could warble, as if grateful for the protection shown them.

At length, we came to an open meadow, on one side of which appeared a bold and lofty portal of stone. Entering here, I found myself in a noble garden filled with fruit trees, and the more useful products of horticulture, kept in the most perfect order. Passing through a door in the southern wall, a road at the back of the crescent led to where the owner of the scene of enchantment, I had just quitted, had his residence in two large houses, joined together, to which was added a gallery, thrown over an archway, constituting the prolongation of a magnificent library.

The door of Mr. Beckford's house was opened by the porter, a dwarf, named Pero. I took leave of my companion, Mr. Goodrich, the architect, to whose kindness I felt indebted for the pleasure I had experienced, and that I was about to receive. I have said I had seen Mr. Beckford on horseback, with the Duke of Hamilton, but I had no idea of ever approaching the presence of a man so retiring, proud, and inaccessible. It was, in fact, the most difficult thing possible to get acquainted with him—all but impracticable for any one not connected with literature or art. He had great resources for the employment of his time; he had none to spare for "dawdling," so he called it, for he told me subsequently, he never had a moment's *ennui* in his life. Byron, he said, had defied the world, and been beaten. He had never defied the world, but could live out of it; he cared nothing about it, and it could not beat him; he had seen all he could see of it, and knew how little it was worth.

An acquaintance once made, Mr. Beckford was unreserved, kind, and of a feeling disposition; but evidently quick to anger. But I forget that his dark-complexioned dwarf porter, Pero, as broad as he was long, had opened the door of his house to me—my companions had disappeared, and I was alone. A second servant led the way up to the library, the prolongation of which was over the arch already mentioned. This the people of Bath gave out was the habitation of the mysterious dwarf. They knew, as I have said, as little of Mr. Beckford as if he dwelt fifty miles away. The servant announced my name, and retired.

The author of "Vathek" was sitting before a table

covered with books and engravings. He rose, and, bowing with all the ease of a gentleman of the old school, began conversation without further ceremony. He was then in his seventy-fourth year, but did not look anything like as old. His temperance and activity, no doubt, contributed to this less senile appearance. Rather of a slender and delicate, than an athletic frame, he appeared a trifle above the middle height, dressed in a green coat, with cloth-covered buttons, a buff-coloured waistcoat, breeches of the same colour as his coat, and brown-topped boots, the fine cotton stocking appearing just over them. His eyes were small, acute, and grey, but expressive; his features in other respects not remarkable. On the whole, he appeared much as well-bred gentlemen did about thirty years before.

Again acknowledging my sense of his kindness, and the honour he had done me, I was in hopes I should discover the ground of his civility. He told me, he knew me well by name. He knew that I had written a "History of Wine," which he had in his library, and a harrowing account of certain shipwrecks. "I see few persons," he observed, "but I know all that passes in the literary world. Do me the favour to sit, and I will show you some of the rare things I possess. I have engaged to be your Cicerone."

I cared little about seeing the treasures he possessed, compared to keeping up the conversation with one whose extraordinary talents, and mysterious life, had so attracted the general curiosity. He rose, and brought to me the celebrated MS. that had once belonged to Shah Aulum, at Delhi. It contained a series of portraits of the great men of the Mogul empire. He had purchased

it at the sale of the treasures of the great French orientalist, M. Langles, who died in 1824, keeper of the MSS. at the royal library, in Paris, where, I informed Mr. Beckford, I had visited Langles, in 1817. I observed that, in his tower, I had taken down a volume of Wilkes' Letters, being in hopes to draw him into conversation about the times of Lord Chatham and the American war, in which I always felt interested—I partly succeeded. I observed that he did not use spectacles. He said he never had any occasion for them, as his sight was as good as it had ever been. In place of looking at his vast collection of curiosities, we got into conversation about the East and *Vathek*. He told me that the erection of the tower I had just seen, had no connection with that at Fonthill. At the latter place, it was a necessary appendage to a building of similar architecture. At Lansdowne, I must be aware, without some such elevation above the plateau, no prospect could be obtained. He was fond of gardening, planting, and building—whatever would employ him in the open air.

“‘*Vathek*,’” I observed, “made a great sensation when it appeared?”

“You will hardly credit how closely I could apply myself to study when young. I wrote ‘*Vathek*’ in the French, as it now stands, at twenty-two years of age. It cost me three days and two nights of labour. I never took off my clothes the whole time. It made me ill.”

“Your mind must have been deeply imbued with a love for Eastern literature?”

“I revelled day and night, for a time, in that sort of

reading. It was a relief from the dryness of the old classical writers. The Greek and Latin were always tasks ; the Persian I began to teach myself."

"Byron praises the description of the 'Hall of Eblis' for its sublimity. It is simply described."

"That is a great point ; all grand descriptions must be simple. Byron complimented me on my 'Vathek' more than once."

"I never read any description like that of the 'Hall of Eblis' in any of the Eastern writings."

"I took it from the 'Hall of Old Fonthill,' which was remarkably large—perhaps the largest in a private house in the kingdom—but I made mine larger still. There were numerous places of exit from it into other parts of the house, by long, winding passages. It was from that hall I worked, magnifying and colouring it with Eastern character. All the females were portraits drawn from the domestic establishment of Old Fonthill—their good or evil qualities ideally exaggerated to suit my purpose."

He begged me to accept a copy of the best French edition, which he fetched from another room, writing in it, "From the Author." I told him I had been much struck with the description of the descent of "Vathek to the Hall of Eblis;" that I thought new and grand the continued acceleration, until the sensation was as of one falling from a precipice. He requested I would show it to him. The French edition ran:—"Comme ils se hâtaient avec une ardente impatience, leurs pas s'accélérent à un point qu'ils semblaient tomber rapidement dans un précipice, plutôt que marcher."

"It did not strike me before," said Mr. Beckford ;

“ the description is obscure as to the cause of the acceleration. There is sublimity in my story, they say—so the obscure is not out of place.”

I asked him whether the three episodes of “ Vathek ” were still in existence, the histories of Alasi and Firouz, of Prince Barkiarokh, and of Kalilah, and Zulkais, who were shut up in the palace of subterranean fire.

He replied that he destroyed one, because he thought it too wild. The other two might some day see the light. Mentioning “ Vathek ” as the author’s first literary performance, he informed me that his lives of extraordinary painters were written earlier. He did not know who translated “ Vathek ” into English, but it was tolerably well done. I quoted a passage where the quaintness was ill-turned. He remarked it might be true in one or two places, but it was not ill done, as a whole. He then spoke of his attempt to hit off criticisms on the Dutch painters. He told me that the housekeeper at old Fonthill used to get a fee by exhibiting the house and pictures to strangers. She knew nothing of the artists’ names, and gave more extraordinary ones to the artists who had executed them, than ever before entered the brain of woman, while she would expatiate on excellencies in pictures, of which there was no trace. This temptation to mischief was irresistible to a youth of seventeen ; his age when he wrote the “ Memoirs.” He supplied the good woman with a copy ; and she caught up the phrases, used the names of the fictitious wives of imaginary painters, and thus rendered her descriptions more absurdly picturesque to his delight. The book became her text book to all visitors ; and quotations continually fell from her to strangers

about the merits of Og of Bassan, and Watersouchy of Amsterdam. Before a picture of Rubens, she would dissert on the merits of Blunderbussiana of Venice, or the Herr Sucrewasser, of Vienna, and the Wiltshire squires and farmers of those days swallowed it all for the honest truth. He had worked hard, when young, at acquiring the Persian. He had visited Geneva and France early in life, and been introduced to Voltaire, and saw him the same year in which he died. Voltaire had placed his hand upon his head, and given him his blessing—in person a mere skeleton of a man. He was in Paris when the Bastile was stormed.

I rose, and expressed fear I was trespassing upon his time. He assured me I was not. He then told me he was aware I had written a notice of his work on "Italy, Spain, and Portugal." You struck upon my real feelings in your observations; I am indebted for your remarks (the real secret of his attention to me, I imagine). My sketches were drawn up recently from very inefficient notes of more than half a century's standing. Here, I observed, that I well knew every minute object described in the first six chapters of his second volume. He demanded if the description was faithful, he was not certain of its being so. I replied in the affirmative. That I was at home in the scenes of my boyhood, on perusing his pages. The stone pyramid, the scent of the wall-flowers, the grove of elms, Arwenick, Trefusis, the vast brakes of furze, scenting the air with the perfume of apricots, primroses, and violets, all in bloom the first week in March, the soft, blue sky, the calm sea, and the fishing-boats, brought the picture to my mind as described by him. I was a child of four or five

years old. He must have passed and repassed my door.

"That is singular," said Beckford; "and at the distance of half a century and more, we meet in Lansdowne Crescent. Human destiny is a puzzle. What are become of the Portuguese friends I was then on my way to see! Death has taken them all."

I asked if the Portuguese court was remarkably dissolute. He replied, not more than other courts were in those days. Some of the nobility and ecclesiastics had great goodness of heart, but they were indolent, gluttonous, and luxurious. The country-people were good; the *canaille* of the towns abominably bad—vile. The ignorance of all ranks was deplorable. The prior of St. Vincent, a particular friend, was an excellent man, possessed of considerable learning. The climate of Portugal was lovely—heavenly.

I rose and took my leave; Mr. Beckford accompanied me to the stairs, pointing out the more remarkable pictures, which covered the walls of the staircase. Before I wished him good morning, he requested I would call upon him, without ceremony, while I was in Bath. He should be always at home to me between twelve and two o'clock.

The next time I called on the author of "Vathek," I found him in a room on the entrance-floor of his house, seated before an upright, grand piano-forte, of a remarkably fine tone. I observed that the instrument was placed against a fine scarlet-cloth curtain, of considerable fullness, which, he told me, was to prevent the wall of the room from deflecting the sound.

We had much conversation about Lords Chatham and

Littleton, who were both friends of his father. The owner of Fonthill took their advice about his son's education; and old Beckford paid his preceptors liberally.

Mr. Beckford lost his father when he was about eleven years old. He spoke of him as a man of great political integrity, and mentioned a banquet given by him at the Mansion House, in the year of his death. To this the company, consisting of forty-nine members of the House of Peers, and a great number of the House of Commons, went in a procession. One of the toasts he gave was, "May the wicked be taken from before the king, that his throne may be established in righteousness." This banquet alone cost the Lord Mayor ten thousand pounds, and filled most of the rooms in the Mansion House. He intended to propose to his guests a written agreement, binding them on their honour to act in public life purely after the dictates of their consciences, and to pledge themselves to maintain inviolate the principles of the constitution. The Marquis of Rockingham prevented this proposal from being put. His father thought no one could then swerve from his principles without proclaiming his own disgrace. Mr. Beckford told me, that his mother was of the Abercorn branch of the Hamilton family. His father's sister married the Earl of Effingham, who was very fond of her nephew when a child, being often a guest at Fonthill. Lords Chatham and Camden he well remembered among the visitors, also Lord Littleton and the old Duke and Duchess of Queensbury. He had a nine years' minority, and Lord Chatham being consulted on his education, he and his tutor used to visit the great statesman at Burton Pynsent. William Pitt was his

companion there. Pitt was an excellent classical scholar. Lady Hester Pitt, to imitate her brother, insisted on learning Greek. Lord and Lady Chatham had a small grazing farm, which occupied their mutual attention, but Lady Chatham's most, for his Lordship attended more to the grounds and garden. Beckford described him as tall, thin, and stooping from the gout; his eyes singularly keen; his air commanding and dignified; his manners exceedingly simple. Lord Chatham said the only fault of Beckford's father was, that he was apt "to overshoot himself in council." Mr. Beckford was much given to reading the "Arabian Nights," when a boy, which Lord Chatham disapproved; but commended him for a speech he repeated, being a translation from Thucydides, for which he had been prepared by his tutor to show off before the Earl; so pleased was he, that he held him up to his son William as an example. This got him considerable credit. William Pitt was carefully instructed, and very correct, but his knowledge was confined. "He had not so much imagination as myself. He was more discerning and observant; more pleasing in his manners, and neat in expression; but less lively and energetic."

Not having been in the room before, he pointed out to me the St. Catharine of Raphael, now in the British Gallery; and, taking a small key out of his waistcoat pocket, unlocked the inner frame, so as to remove the glass, which was only kept before it as a protection.

"Is not that fine?"

"I said I thought Raphael, in this case, had a feeling like Rubens, with his female *embonpoint*."

"No; the women of Raphael are Italian in grace,

stout or not, they look round, firm, and well-formed. The women of Rubens are Flemish, or Dutch, if you will; flaccid, oysterish, as if they had been fattened in their own quagmires and marshes."

He said he had attempted to make some verses on the picture, and had failed. He feared he was getting too old to write poetry any more. I observed it was an inspiring theme, and he bade me try it.* He spoke of the "Times" newspaper, which stated he had expended a million sterling on Fonthill—the world loved anything but truth. He had expended upon it just £273,000 some odd hundreds; his steward was out, or he could have told me to a shilling; and that expenditure was scattered over some years. The fall of the tower he fully expected. The foundation was insecure, the architect being grossly negligent, had been paid for turning an arch over the suspected loose ground, and had never made it. I observed that it must have been painful to part with such a place. He observed that he was not so childish as to cry about a plaything. The chancellor, too, had deprived him by a decree of two estates, on which there were fifteen hundred slaves, which estates had been in his family threescore years, and had accompanied it with the reflection that Mr. Beckford had plenty of property left. That decree ultimately made him quit Fonthill. He had been sorry to throw so many people out of employment, as he had kept busily employed there, but he had no choice in the matter.

One of the undertakings of this extraordinary man was to build a wall round Fonthill, nearly eight

* I did so and sent him the lines in which he made two emendations.

miles long, and twelve feet high, in twelve months. It was accomplished in a week or two only over that time. It was done to keep off sportsmen who would take no warning from his servants. No one was permitted to see Fonhill, but at considerable intervals of time. Two or three hundred workmen had constant employment under his own directions. Some people, however, did get in disguised as workmen. One, supposed to have got in over the wall, was met by Mr. Beckford himself, not far from the house. He was mistaken for his gardener.

“I thought the joke might be followed out,” he observed, “the stranger was a very gentlemanly man, well read, sensible, and agreeable in manners. I undertook to show him the grounds and gardens. I imagine he began to suspect I was not the gardener before I had done. I then proposed to show him the house; and, having exhibited the principal apartments, I took him to the room where the dinner was that moment serving up, and opening the door, I begged him to walk in and partake—I told him of his mistake, and would have no denial. We conversed on a variety of topics, and he seemed at home in all. When he rose to go away, it was becoming dark, and I asked if he had any conveyance. He only expressed a wish to be shown to the park gates. A servant was sent with him accordingly. I never knew who he was. It is said I treated this stranger with rudeness and what not. It was impossible.”

I told him I had read in a magazine of his going down the dance at court with Miss North, in 1782. He said he remembered he had done so. He agreed that George

III. was destitute of feeling and delicacy ; and told me some anecdotes of him, I cannot repeat here. I remarked that Lord Chatham declared the King to be capable of the greatest duplicity. He then related a conversation of the king with an officer of the Guards, who had fired on the mob in the city riots. He heard it take place. The king came out of his closet, and, first seeing the officer in question, abruptly said to him—"Peppered them well, I hope—peppered them well?" Everybody near was struck with the unfeeling coarseness of the speech, while the officer to whom it was addressed, and whose name I forget—but I think it was Howard—said, with great gravity, perceiving the nature of the remark, "I hope your majesty's troops will always do their duty!"

Lord Chatham, who had taken great pains with his son's education, asked him one day, on his return from a visit, how he had been entertained. Pitt replied, "Most delectably." "Delectably, Sir!" said Chatham, looking at his son with severity—"delectably! Never let me hear that affected word from you again." Beckford showed me letters from Pitt in his boyhood, and one or two from Lord Chatham. He well remembered the state of the public mind in regard to Lord Chatham. He told me his father was at Westminster School, with Lords Mansfield and Kinnoul, and the three were called the triumvirate, for being the best verse makers. His father, he said, was a bad speaker, but able to write, well ; he was a most intrepid man, nothing daunted him, and he was actuated by the most patriotic feelings. He became the citizen of London to uphold free principles.

He mentioned Pengreep, a seat that I knew, where he had visited the owner, a Mr. Beauchamp, while he

was anticipating a visit to the orange-groves of Portugal. He spoke to me in high commendation of Dr. Wolcot (Peter Pindar), who had visited him at Fonthill, with Lord Nelson, and Sir William and Lady Hamilton. He observed, truly enough, that Wolcot was a delightful companion, and the best story-teller he ever heard; that he knew the two worlds well—men and books—and was a shrewd observer of life. He could only remain a week at Fonthill, where his humour and his play upon human follies much entertained the company.

Lady Hamilton was a fine figure, not so beautiful as handsome. Sir William called her his Grecian. Nelson was her dupe. She persuaded him that she had obtained the victualling of his fleet. It was her husband who made her his agent with the queen. She never had a child, though Nelson believed she had, and she passed one off upon him for her own. The execution of Carracioli was wholly indefensible.

There is a characteristic story of Mr. Beckford. Both the coachman and his wife were old servants, and rather favourites. The lady going out one evening to see a friend, and partake of a cup of bohea, found the rain inconvenient, and her caro sposo, the Jehu, arriving very opportunely with the carriage, she got into it, and was driven to her pleasure destination, as it was thought, unobserved. But Beckford's carriage was too well-known to escape observation. It was soon rumoured among the domestics that the coachman's wife used her master's carriage—nothing less would content her. They soon contrived that the intelligence should reach the master's ears. His passionate temper known,

a tremendous explosion was expected to break over the devoted pair. The tidings were conveyed to the master, no doubt with all likely to rouse his anger. But the master was perfectly calm. Much less things had been known to put him into an intolerable passion. It was probable, too, for there never was a kinder master, that he noticed malice in the mode in which the intelligence was conveyed to him. He, therefore, showed no anger, but ordered his steward to engage a footman for six months, and to give him a whimsical suit of livery. When his orders were obeyed, the coachman and his wife were sent for, and told that, as they were so aspiring as to require his carriage when they paid their visits, it was not consistent they should be without an attendant in the house, that he had provided them a footman, who, he insisted, should duly attend upon them at table, and act towards them as usual in such cases, from that day forward. Not a word of excuse would have been permitted. The astounded coachman and his wife withdrew. The footman was kept in his place for some months. The ridicule this caused in the establishment, it cannot be doubted, was a punishment every way sufficient for the offence.

In like manner his steward was punished, being condemned to sleep on a down bed all his life. His master enjoyed the costly joke. It appeared, that he had not received a *douceur* from the upholster who had furnished Fonthill. As usual with servants in such cases, the man depreciated the goods to his master; and declared the beds were stuffed with quills. He could not sleep on his own bed, it was impossible. His master sent for the tradesman, who declared he had provided none but

the best feathers procurable, exactly the same as with the other beds. The thing was seen through.

"Pray, is there anything softer than feathers, Mr. H——?" said Mr. Beckford.

"I know, Sir, of nothing but down."

"Poor fellow! he gets no rest, in consequence of his hard bed! Change the feathers; send him 'a down bed of the softest kind—I must take care of a good servant."

The bed came, and the steward was made to sleep upon it to the day of his death, encountering ridicule enough for the mode he took to extort his toll.

I had been in Bath for some considerable time before I knew Mr. Beckford. During the little time longer that I remained, I called about once a week at Lansdowne. The conversation nearly always turned upon literature and art. He had no opinion of Mr. Hope's abilities, but as a good "furniture man," until he blazed forth so unexpectedly in "Anastatius." It surprised him—"the world was full of miracles."

He read all new works of moment, but complained of the novels that inundated society, as destroying historical truth. He spoke of some of Hook's, as diverting, by the situations of his characters; and of Bulwer, and of "Pompeii." We talked of Bonnivard, and Chillon, of Mount Edgcumbe, and of some of the English coast scenery. He bought Gibbon's library, at Lausanne—above six thousand volumes—to amuse himself when he passed that way. The most valuable work was the "Eustathius." He nearly read himself blind there, and never used the library afterwards, but gave it to his physician, Dr. Scholl. He boasted that Horace Walpole feared, if his Strawberry-Hill collection

were to be sold, it would come into his, Beckford's, hands, and so he tied it up. "But I have outlived his object, and have secured specimens of his treasures." Beckford pretended to jest about the heralds and heraldry, when I spoke of them, as become rubbish, since the visitations. He fully admitted it; but he was a great stickler for ancestry, notwithstanding. It was a lever to his pride, and when young, he had studied heraldry, and imagined himself descended from John of Gaunt; and in after life, he did not shake off the impress of these notions.

I sent Beckford, at Lansdowne, a catalogue of Sanscrit and Eastern books, given me by Sir William Ouseley, and a copy of a poem of my own, of which not many got into the world. It was but a few days before I quitted Bath. He wrote me in return:

"Mr. Beckford thanks Mr. Redding for the catalogue (book-learned and curious), but ten times more for 'Gabrielle,' which so vividly recalls the Alps to his imagination.

"Mr. Beckford will feel much pleasure in looking over this fervid and most impressive little poem with its author, any morning (between twelve and two) that might happen to suit Mr. Redding's convenience.

"Lansdowne, Sept. 16, 1835."

He read and commented upon different passages as he proceeded—pencil in hand. He wondered I did not publish it more extensively. I explained my reason. I said that Campbell and Rogers thought well of it, but that I was not satisfied with some portions, about which I could not please myself. He bade me not lose time

in what I intended to do ; delays were not prudent. He was then composing a work on the peerage, rather caustic, which he called his "Liber Veritatis."

When I left Bath, he informed me he had a house in Park Lane, where, when in town, he should be happy to see me. I thanked him, and took my leave. One day, calling in Park Lane with a copy of "Huarte" in my pocket I had picked up at a book-stall, I left it with him. I saw, to my surprize, in the "Morning Chronicle," a paragraph so much akin to a subject on which we had been conversing the day before, that I thought myself bound to express, in a note, my utter ignorance of its concoction. Mr. Beckford wrote me in reply :—

"There is nothing to pick off that dry bone, 'Huarte;' but the passage noted is really curious.

"The little paragraph squeezed into the 'M. Chronicle,' I am told, was copied *literatim et verbatim* from the 'Herald.' Who sent it thither, I cannot conjecture, but I am almost certain, from internal evidence, it was not you.

"If you happen to be disengaged next Sunday morn, about twelve, pray come to me, and I will read part of the 'Vathek' episodes to you. Those I may possibly soon publish, but cannot bring myself to let out the 'Liber Veritatis'—ce n'est pas toute vérité qui est bonne à dire.

"Your's ever most gratefully,

"W. B."

I was surprised to hear him read these episodes

through, without spectacles, on a gloomy February day, and in a room by no means well-windowed. He waited an hour before he began for the Duke of Hamilton, who had promised to come and hear them, but did not arrive. They bore much of the "Vathek" character, and were written in French. One depicted a beautiful female, a half mortal, half angel, abstraction, coloured in the author's richest Oriental manner. He told me I should not know Lansdowne again. He had crowned it with a forest, the trees being planted by his old gardener, Vincent. "Vincent came to me and said—

"'Now, there is only one thing wanting on Lansdowne.'

"You want a job, Vincent, what is it?"

"'Why, there is no shade—the sun shines very hot there in summer; it should be planted, that you might walk in shade all the way up.'

"Nonsense; before the trees grow up, where will you and I be?" Vincent was then seventy and above.

"'Don't say that, your honour; you shall walk up under the shade of your own trees next spring. If your honour will find the money, I will answer for the trees.'

"Why, then, go to work, Vincent—get the trees."

"I have been out with the work-people planting. I have renewed my old habits; you will see Lansdowne Forest when you next come to Bath." He told me of the death of his favourite dog. I recorded other portions of his conversation in Park Lane elsewhere, a short time after his decease, in the "New Monthly."

After his funeral, in 1844, I went down to see, before they were dispersed, the place and rarities he had

left behind him. I spent half a day at the tower. While I was there, the King of Saxony came to see it ; but he was not admitted. I could not but admire anew the taste that selected and adorned the spot, and be struck with the wreck that must soon take place of the rare and precious things deposited in his domains. This singular man now rests, after his own fancy, in a granite block, like a pre-Adamite king, in one of the most charming sites for a cemetery in England. The last three or four hours I spent there, the domestic, who kept the tower, was the only individual besides in the grounds. There was a speaking silence everywhere around. I left the place in a melancholy mood. On such occasions, something occult oppresses us in the foreshadowing of the conclusion of our own mortal history.

When on the continent, any extraordinary sights had been certain to attract Beckford's attention—anything like conjuring or magic rousing his curiosity. In Paris, about the revolutionary time, 1789, he stated that he met with an individual who said he could introduce him to a real magician. Everybody then believed in supernatural things. The personage in question was an old man, who lived in a remote part of the city. He described the approach to the man's residence as being through a carpenter's yard, apparently deserted. Passing on, he entered a large apartment, in which he was met by the owner, in a magician's garb. There was tapestry on the walls, which were decorated with a number of tasteful ornaments. At the back of the room was a garden, the descent to which was by stone steps. On the summit of these stood a large vase, apparently filled with spring water. After a little ordi-

nary conversation, the stranger desired his visitor to look into the vase.

“ Was the water transparent—clear ? ”

“ Yes.”

The exhibitor then uttered some kind of abracadabra, and the water seemed to become at once full of the most extraordinary creatures, in all sorts of animal combinations. The apartment, too, suddenly appeared full of appearances of the same description. He was astounded, and drew back, hardly knowing whether it was reality or deception. He had scarcely recovered from his surprise and admiration, when the whole of the creatures disappeared ; even the old man had taken himself off. It was the most mysterious thing he had ever encountered. He was certain it was a trick ; but how performed, and why, as he paid nothing for the exhibition, he never discovered ; for he never saw the chief performer afterwards.

Nelson being at Fonthill, he proposed to give the hero a drive through his grounds. He had a ride, from fifteen to twenty miles in extent, through his plantations. He drove four very gentle animals, of which he had a perfect command. Nelson took a place by his side, but, observing the horses a little lively, he became uneasy, and, in a few moments, requested his host to pull up, he “ could not bear it any longer.” This is a singular instance of the effect of habit in a brave man, of whom a battery of cannon quickened the courage, and who dreaded no foe, sword in hand.

At a flower show in Sidney Gardens, early one morning, before the public were admitted, I found Mr. Beckford.

"Good morning, Mr. Redding."

"Good morning."

"Is there any literary news?"

"I know of none, Mr. Beckford; swallowed up in politics, I have no time to refresh with literary works."

"I have been reading novels lately. What is Mr. Bulwer about—anything new?"

"I don't know, I hear nothing of what is doing in town except from the newspapers."

"True enough, I dare say—all bustle just now with electioneering—I have just finished reading Bulwer's 'Pompeii,' I was pleased with it, but there was a fault in it, that its author might have easily rectified, if his attention had been drawn to it."

"To what do you allude?"

"To the advantage he would have gained in throwing more sturdiness and energy into his characters, for he is dealing with Romans. He has power to delineate well when he pleases."

"It did not perhaps strike him at the moment."

"It is very probable—we do not always discover in our own labours that which would render them more efficient. We annex to the Roman character a degree of stoicism and hardihood, more it is possible, than it really possessed. Our associations lead us to form opinions that facts might not justify. I have been looking, too, into a novel of Hook's. He has no depth, but sometimes displays great ingenuity in the situations in which he places his characters. I cannot read his books twice. I was amused at the entrance of a stranger upon the choice grounds of an individual who

took a great pride in them, bustling about as if the place was his own. When called to account, he persuaded the owner he was a railway engineer, come to survey the place. That there was a company about to run a railway through his gardens, and close under his parlour windows. The description of the man on receiving the intelligence was well conceived, and his mode of showing his fear, anger, and mortification. It is in this sort of trickery that Hook appears best. He has no sterling qualities, all is jest, comedy, not power. He is amusing to those who seek to kill a lounge, without the trouble of carrying off what they read."

I do not recollect to what novel of Hook's Beckford alluded.

In my interviews in Park Street, the conversation turned for the most part upon the events of the day. He spoke of his age and good health, and with a philosophic resignation about death. I perceived at times, a struggle in his mind between pride and attachment to what he had imbibed in early youth, in fact his early predilections, and his sense of truth. Proud, attached to heraldry and its groundless claims to esteem, unless, where useful for tracing descents, he would affect to believe it a mere amusement, an idle thing to one person, but to another, who was of the common notion on such matters, he would treat the study as one of great consequence. There were nearly sixty years between his first and latest publication.

The cause of the fall of Fonthill Tower was the disgraceful conduct of the architect Wyatt. A man who was ill, and at the point of death expressed a wish to see Beckford. He paid no attention to the application

at first, a second pressing message came ; he went and found that the sick man had been foreman of the works at Fonthill. He asked its recent owner, if he did not believe that the Abbey Tower was built on an arched foundation. Mr. Beckford said he knew it, for he had paid for it to the tune of nearly twenty thousand pounds.

"You were deceived," replied the dying man, "it is built on the sand, and will some day fall down."

Mr. Beckford at once posted off to Mr. Farquhar, who had just bought the building, to tell him of the relief of the man's conscience, and the fear he entertained. Mr. Farquhar replied coolly, it would last his time. It did fall soon afterwards, fortunately without mischief.

"It was well I was not crushed," said Mr. Beckford, "like a lobster in my shell."

He was of an impatient disposition, furious when in anger, but soon pacified, and then hardly knew how to make sufficient restitution. One day he told old Vincent to shift some seats in his grounds, which he called toadstools, because they consisted of a round seat fixed to a stake driven into the ground. Vincent wished his master should be satisfied with the spot himself, to which they were removed, and, therefore, placed the tops loosely upon the stakes, to have his satisfactory opinion as to the site chosen. Going into his grounds one morning and seeing the seats, he at once seated himself on one of them, and fell sprawling on the turf, seat and all. He sprang up in a furious passion, his dignity was offended, his cane was in his hand, and he struck at old Vincent with it, who speedily retreated among the young trees, his master after him

in a rage. It was a curious thing to see two persons both beyond seventy, pursued and pursuing. It came to nothing more than a short race. Vincent dodged among the trees, and his master recollecting himself ceased the pursuit. The next morning he sent five pounds to Vincent, who said he should like such a race every day upon the same terms.

Beckford had a genuine love of a little mischief even to the last. He was well aware that he was followed by more than one ignoramus at the picture exhibitions, who wanted to learn the opinion of so eminent a connoisseur. He would begin to praise aloud a very inferior picture, to the wonder of the friend who was showman to him. One day the question was put, why he praised a very poor performance so extravagantly. "Did not you see that fool — following me to get my opinion? He will buy that trumpery performance." The ignorant dealer really did buy it, and Beckford was delighted, hating all such pretenders to a knowledge of art, as he did.

He related that Cosway, the artist, was a man not a little wrapped up in mental delusions. "I was once told," he observed, "that a friend invited Cosway to dinner. He had an idea that he knew something of magic, and agreed to the invitation, if his friend would consent to his going away at an early hour. On a promise of secrecy, Cosway said he was going that night to meet the Wandering Jew, who had arrived in London. Asking Cosway to permit him also to meet the wanderer, he refused, and soon after wished him good evening. Turning into one of the theatres, after the painter's departure, he saw there

Cosway, seated quietly in one of the boxes. He watched him home to his residence in Stratford Place when the performance was over. The next day he asked the painter what he had seen.

“‘O,’ he replied, ‘wonders beyond all conception—but I am forbidden to communicate them.’

“He then told the painter where he had seen him. Cosway denied it with great indignation, and said it was a spirit that had assumed his shape; that such a thing had often happened to him.”

Beckford reverted to his youth as the agreeable part of his life. He said, “Everything then was so fresh and vivid, I continually fancied myself an inspired child of nature.” He could not travel like other people, on and on. “When I saw a point from which there was probably a finer view, I used to leave the carriage and scramble away to it, no matter how arduous the task.” Even then, at seventy-six, he said he should not be able to travel over new scenery like other people, for he should ramble off to enjoy every charming bit of nature he might chance to light upon.

He related to me how he had served, in the time of my own recollection, that bold woman the Duchess of Gordon. I had met her once at a ball in the city. She was then old and painted an inch thick—the paint crumbled off her neck. “You remember having seen her? Well, I played the managing mamma a trick which I shall never forget, for many reasons.”

He had a great horror of meanness, particularly in pecuniary matters, and always expressed his feeling on the subject, no matter whom it concerned. He was in consequence plundered by agents and servants enor-

mously. This mean attempt of the Mother-Duchess to get her child a hold upon his fortune, made him resolve to give her a lesson.

“At that time everybody talked of Mr. Beckford’s enormous wealth, and everything around me was proportionately exaggerated. She imagined my house was a Potosi. How desirable I was for her daughter ! I received a hint from London of the honour to be done me by this daughter-selling mamma. I might have been aged and impotent, it was of no consequence if she could have got my property. I determined to give her a lesson. Fonthill was put into such order as might not be unworthy the reception of royalty itself. I determined to raise her cupidity to the highest pitch, by the display I made, and then not to see her. My major-domo was ordered to say that Mr. Beckford had desired her grace to be received, he feared in a manner not equal to the occasion ; but, he added, that unfortunately not aware of the exact day of her grace’s intended arrival, he had shut himself up. It was more than any official’s place was worth to disturb him. The duchess admired everything, and conducted herself with wonderful equanimity. She slept the first night amid her honours, and the next morning the question her grace first put was : ‘Do you think I can see Mr. Beckford to-day ?’

“The reply was indecisive, of course. In the meanwhile, all that could attract in the way of show and splendour was placed before her. My master of the ceremonies did not know what to make of my whims, the perseverance of the duchess, or the part he was to play in the farce.

“ ‘ Perhaps Mr. Beckford will be visible to-morrow.’

“ ‘ Possibly, your grace, but it is uncertain.’

“ She remained in this way six or seven days, and went off to town furious with disappointment, circulating about me in every society the grossest scandals.

“ Think of such a woman’s rage for the lesson I gave her—a lady who never suffered anything to interfere with her objects of cupidity or vengeance.”

The author of “Vathek” lived, during the latter part of his life, in a sphere of his own creation. The world did not understand him. The most atrocious calumnies were heaped upon him, which he scorned; for he possessed untameable haughtiness of spirit. Seldom gloomy, exceedingly sarcastic, sometimes prejudiced, but open to conviction, he was admired and feared, to all which his inaccessibility contributed. Yet a more kind-hearted man never lived, for a spoiled child of fortune. He gave away large sums, but would not allow his name to go forth in charity lists; if the donor must be mentioned, he would have A. B. or C. D. He refused to receive even thanks. “When I give, I don’t exchange the gift for any one’s thanks,” he used to say. He was often played upon; but it made no difference in his charity. His servants remained with him from youth to age. His recollection and sight were perfect to the last. He stooped but very slightly after his eightieth year. When he was eighty-three his horse ran away with him. His groom followed, but could not overtake him; but he contrived to sit firmly, and, when he had stopped the animal,

coolly said to his man, "Did you ever see anything so well done as that?"

Jewels, and costly articles of all kinds, lay in open drawers about his house; and, being told he might be robbed, he replied he knew all his servants too well to fear that; and, as to burglars, "I am in no fear of them. All my servants are great guns in their way, and I am a prodigious large blunderbuss myself." One lot of diamonds he had unset. They lay loose in an ancient *tazza*. These he named his "cat diamonds," because a relation of his, who kept a number of cats, to which, when a boy, he pretended to be very partial, bequeathed them to him out of gratitude for his attention to her favourite grimalkins.

Beckford's mother had a fixed prejudice against our universities. He said, in consequence of that, he was sent to Geneva at seventeen years of age, and there studied civil law under M. Naville. There, too, he became intimate with Saussure and Bonnet. He was much noticed by Huber the naturalist, so well known for his work, "*Nouvelles Observations sur les Abeilles*." He visited Voltaire at Ferney. Going through the village to the house, he passed the chapel, over the entrance of which was the inscription "*Deo Optimo Maximo*." The people said that the philosopher of Ferney, as they called him, had once or twice preached there; but the officiating minister in general was the Père Adam, who lived at Ferney, whom Voltaire described so often to his guests in "*Quoiqu'il fût le père Adam, il n'était pas le premier des hommes*." At the Château, Madame Denis received Beckford with his

tutor, and announced them to Voltaire as he entered the apartment—a very dark-complexioned, shrivelled and thin man, hardly above the middle height. His large piercing eyes were the most striking of his features. He received his visitors in the manner of a finished gentleman. “See,” he said, “un pauvre octogénaire about to quit this world.” “He then alluded to my father,” said Beckford, “whom he had probably seen, asked a few questions about England, how I liked Geneva, and a few similar things, standing all the time, as well as his visitors. He concluded humorously, alluding to our royal speeches: ‘My Lords and gentlemen, many thanks for your visit here. Pray take some refreshment; then, if it will amuse you, look into my garden and my situation; and now give me leave to retire.’ A cold collation was laid before us by Madame Denis, and we took our leave.”

The author of “Vathek” told me he hated cruelty to animals. He said he abhorred the senseless sport of fox-hunting, and killing tame deer with savage hounds for mere amusement. “Can there be anything more absurd than that men, or rather brutes, should occupy themselves in this cruel manner?”

In his “*Liber Veritatis*,” mentioned in the foregoing note, one passage I remember, bitterly sarcastic upon noblemen who affect to support their order, and marry anybody’s daughters, or rather their money. This inconsistency and meanness he severely lashed. A carcass butcher in the city, who had accumulated great wealth, had two daughters who were picked up by a brace of noblemen. He described the father as pressing

the hides of the animals with his fingers, smoothing their sleek sides, trying how the fat lay on their ribs, and taking them off the grazier's hands to conduct them to the fragrant purlieus of Smithfield, and at last how the illustrious parent was deposited in the family vault at Shadwell, "his remains followed to the grave by two of the beasts he had purchased."

Unfortunately his visits to London were short. I did not always know when he was in town, or was often absent myself, and, therefore, saw less of him than I should otherwise have done. One of his commissions to Mr. Smith, the celebrated dealer in engravings, in Lisle Street, where he often lounged, was to discover who had written a certain review of his Italian travels, and on his *Alcobasa* and *Batalha*. I must give it in Mr. Smith's own words.

"'Good heaven, here is one man that really understands me. He has caught the very best parts of my Italy, and I would give the world to know who he is. Can you find out for me? It is really a good work, though of my own production, but I don't think the fools of the present day are able to appreciate it. This man's criticism gives me a better idea of modern literature. As Pope said of Dr. Johnson, no matter who he is, he will soon be *déterré*.'"

"Day after day he asked me," said Mr. Smith, "if I had found out who the critic was, but at last he discovered by some means or another that it was written by Mr. Redding, who he told me some time afterwards he had met in Bath."

This was the secret there is no doubt of Mr. Beckford's civilities to me, of the cause of which at the

time I knew nothing. When I was aware of it I confess I felt flattered, for the author of "Vathek" was no every day individual, as being one of the few whom he admitted among his treasures. It was very difficult to obtain access to him, but when once received, if an individual took with him, he was perfectly affable, open, and free of hauteur. After the decease of this eminent man, having omitted to question him about the machinery of "Vathek," which all acquainted with Eastern literature must know is a mixture of the Arabian and Hindoo mythology, I had observed that some of the impersonations are not to be found in the "Arabian Nights," I was at a loss to conjecture where the author had seen them thus blended. It happened that during the Strawberry Hill sale, he wrote to his agent to purchase "No. 65, 'Memoirs of Whiston,' and the 'Adventures of Abdallah,' curious cuts—a trifling lot, but which I want particularly."

A copy of the Adventures, thus alluded to, fell into my hands by accident some time afterwards. It was the second edition, the date 1730. There were only two out of eight cuts remaining. The Adventures date in the reign of Shah Jehan, father of Arungzebe. Fuzel Khan is mentioned in them. The Brahmins, Fakirs, the Hindoo god Ram, and similar characters from the Hindoo mythology there mingle with Arabian and Mahomedan creed and custom. Fion, King of Gor, Peris and Perises, Divs and Dives, Genius and Ginne, the country of Ginnestan, Gian and his sword, the mountain Kaf, Nour, and similar names with Mr. Beckford's desire to possess a book once familiar to him leads me to believe from the singular mixture of Hindoo

and Mahommedan mythology, that he had used it in addition to the portion of the work he took from old Fonthill House, and the real characters in domestic service there. I lament I did not know of this work until after his death.

Among the anecdotes of Mr. Beckford, after his decease, was an allusion to some remarks he made respecting George III. and Hannah Lightfoot the quakeress, who was seduced by him when Prince George, and never again heard of by her friends. In the Gentleman's and other Magazines, there have been many allusions, for three parts of a century, to this subject from time to time by unknown correspondents. Soon after the notes respecting Mr. Beckford appeared, in an article not written by me, I received the following letter, my name being appended to the articles I wrote. When nearly a century had elapsed from the event to which it alludes, it was in all events singular. I have the writer's name and address, but he did not wish them to be appended.

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“ Sir,

“ Hannah Lightfoot's maiden name was Wheeler, and at the time of her daughter's mysterious disappearance—for disappear she did, and the family never saw her more—she was staying with her brother or nephew, a linen-draper named Wheeler, at the corner of Market Street, St. James's Market. Her brother or nephew kept the shop during his life, and was succeeded by his sons. Not knowing exactly when the death of the former took place, I was unable to state precisely which had the shop at the time in question, but that is

immaterial. Hannah Lightfoot's mother lived near Richmond, and Prince George's admiration of her was known to the people there, as well as to her own family. By some persons well acquainted with the Prince's admiration of her, the well known song of 'The Lass of Richmond Hill' was written. Hannah's mother visited at St. James's Market with her daughter, remaining often for some time as was the case on her daughter's disappearance. Hannah was standing with a little girl about ten years of age, at one of the drawing-room windows over the shop, when a carriage drove by and Hannah immediately making an excuse to the little girl who was with her, and who was her cousin, for going away from her, and putting on her things, left the house by the front door, in place of going through the shop. She left a note behind, telling her mother not to be uneasy about her as in twelve months she should hear from her again, but not before. The mother never did hear of her again, and died of a broken heart. It happened that Hannah had a lover, not a quaker, who after her disappearance gave her family much trouble, imagining they had sent her away to break off their intimacy.

The only intimation her family ever had about her subsequently, was from a gentleman they knew, who happening to be in Germany, and at a ball, saw a female who had with her two boys, whom he at once recalled to memory as Hannah Lightfoot. He endeavoured to speak to her, but finding she was recognized, she left the room, and he was unsuccessful in tracing her out.

"The little girl with her at the time she disappeared,

was afterwards my grandmother. From her I heard the story, little expecting ever to see it in print. I can find a person, a generation older than myself, who also heard it from her lips. The shop in St. James's Market was kept by one of the Wheelers, up to the time it was pulled down to make way for Regent Street. I often heard one of the Wheeler's sisters speak of notice being taken of some of the family by George III. and his queen, when they chanced to see them at Kew or Kensington.

“I am, &c., &c.

“_____.”

George III. had several illegitimate children, according to rumour. The remark of Mr. Beckford must have referred to one of the redoubtable Mrs. Serres' tales. It has served, however, to bring out the truth. Hannah most probably ended her days, after Prince George grew tired of her, in that petty state of Germany which Lord Chatham called the “millstone round the neck of England.”

Mr. Beckford wrote, in 1783, a work full of genius and talent, printed in quarto, entitled “Dreams, waking thoughts, and incidents in a series of letters from various parts of Europe.” When printed it was suppressed from the absurd fear of his friends that from its imaginativeness, when he went into parliament, they might think he would not attend to solid business, and they persuaded him to destroy the entire edition, which was done. He wrote a short burlesque entitled “A Catalogue of Books to be sold by Maister Thomas Dibdin,” while the bibliomania prevailed.

I quitted Bath not without regret, for the tranquillity of the city without the inconvenience of a country town, in remaining comparatively unnoticed in your own pursuit, and the mildness of the climate compared to the metropolis, made me feel partial to the place. It was much changed within my remembrance. Though the visitors were not as numerous as before, the number of residents had increased. There was much dissipation, and much moral strictness observable—much profession of religion, and as much worldly-mindedness as in general accompanies it when in extremes. There was also no want of quiet gentility, and generally courteous and polite manners. I met here Miss W——, a lady who was a natural daughter of Fox, and, like her father, dark complexioned, with black hair and eyebrows, very agreeable in manners. She visited Mrs. Fox, and Lord John Russell once a year. She was sensible and well informed. Since I left the city, she has departed to the world of spirits.

A country curate here wrote me a letter of a character which seemed to bear internal evidence of truth. Having the writer's name, I used it. Soon afterwards I received a letter from the Bishop of Gloucester on the subject, exceedingly christian like and reasonable. His lordship expressed a wish to know the writer. I replied that with me there was no concealment. In it a reflection was cast upon his lordship which he denied to be true, and he had a right to justice. I sent him the original letter, under the promise of returning it to me, which he did, with a polite acknowledgment, and an assurance that the statements it

contained as to his own motives and conduct, were entirely unfounded.

Bath was then a place of resort for idle Irish clergymen, who eat, drank, slept, and played whist, to some tune, curates doing the duty at home, in certain cases to the clerk and the sexton for want of a congregation. In some of the parishes the curacies were sinecures. All this, too, while a Reverend clergyman a friend of mine, the Reverend Mr. Liddiard, who had a living in Ireland, being a conscientious man, and having solemnly pledged himself, as the law required, to keep a school in his parish, a thing evaded in too many cases by the Irish clergy, got a master and opened a school accordingly. Finding the Protestant scholars too few for the master's time, he made friends with the catholic priest, and they selected what should be taught so as to avoid controversy; the school flourished. The moment so excellent a plan was known among his clerical brethren, he was beset by them, and the hateful spirit of Orangeism set to malign him. He determined to quit the country, and making his son his curate came back to England. A few years afterwards, the government adopted the selfsame plan in the public schools there, which he had been driven from the island for adopting in his parish. Not a dozen years ago, I saw advertised in an Irish paper the sale of the effects of a defunct Irish clergyman as follows :

“Abundance of hay, oats, potatoes; innumerable sheep, pigs, and cattle; thirteen draught horses; eight mules, one Spanish; five donkeys; forty thorough-bred hunters; a cap phaeton, travelling chariot, drag, inside

car ; two fishing boats, carriage and tackling (to fish for souls?). In the house sundry rocking chairs, sofas to match of various forms ; down cushions for limbs attacked with gout, a collection of paintings, principally hunting scenes, &c. Very choice wines, and a large quantity of fine old whiskey !”

I do not say a man should not have all these things if he pleases and can afford them, but it is an imposture that the man who derives them from the exercise of a sacred profession, based upon the very opposite to the use of such luxuries, and the coarse and vicious (in him) indulgencies they involve. Shades of St. Peter and St. Paul, of the fishermen on the Lake of Tibieras, how mean was your fare, how scanty your indulgencies compared to such a cormorant as this. In the meanwhile the poor curates, who do the duty, are kept upon the most miserable stipends. I displeased some persons by my remarks on a similar subject, but I had the commendation of some excellent if humble clergymen of the church for my comments.

Prior Park, the residence of “humble Allen,” and of the author of the “Divine Legation,” had become a catholic seminary when I visited it. It was marked by no peculiarity except its pleasant site. Pope’s walk, near by, still retained its name. I walked over Lansdowne to Sir Bevil Granville’s monument, and seated on a barrow-hillock, fancied his headstrong charge up hill to the spot where he fell. The fresh breeze sweeping by, I almost imagined in its rushing, I heard whispers of the deeds of the past. It is one of those solitary spots where voices, not mortal, may be supposed to remind us of the

flight of time, and the change of things, of the waste and renewal of all that the scenes of earth present in the glass of memory, of the wrecks of perished grandeur, and the quenching of the great spirits of their time for ever.

CHAPTER VI.

RETURNING to town, one of the first friends I called upon was Campbell. It was subsequent to his return from Algiers. I was much struck with his altered appearance after two years that I had not seen him. He seemed in low spirits, and was very glad to see me again. I agreed to dine with him the next day in St. James's Street, *tête-à-tête*. I asked him if he felt indisposed. He replied, that he had never felt well since an attack of fever in Algiers, which had "shaken his constitution greatly." I observed that he had lost all that "spruce" appearance, as Byron characterised it, which marked him before, and he was depressed in spirits. Wine did not seem to elevate him as it did once. Some of his remarks were touching—"all things were rapidly changing, we could never be again as we once were." He was certain he should not live long. I attempted to change his mood by observing that his father and sister had lived to a very advanced age. "No matter," he replied, "I am convinced of it—you will outlive me." I remarked that I was

younger, that the longevity of his family was in his favour. He became taciturn, without making reference to the cause of the silence, so unusual in his case, for before then he would combat such a state of feeling often too artificially. He still harped on the effect of the fever upon him. He did not seem to like my quitting town. I had been two years absent, he said, and now was going away for I knew not how long. He repeated his allusion to the changes time operated, and then said, "When I am gone you will write my life?" I replied, "I feared that would be as bad an affair as his own with Mrs. Siddons, there would be no materials, he had prepared no notes of his life unless he had done so recently." I knew pretty well that he had nothing by him relative to himself when we ceased our joint labours. He replied, "I will write some—I will very shortly go about it." I left him at eleven o'clock, feeling much affected with the idea that he was no longer the Thomas Campbell of the old literary time, and of preceding years. I heard that he had ceased to visit many old friends, even Lord Holland. He did "not like to dress for dinner." Then he got into company, often indifferent to that with which he had usually intermixed before. I left town again soon afterwards, with the painful impression that he was fast breaking.

The truth was that his expectations of future good had began to fail, neither the world nor his hopes of it, getting brighter. As we proceed into age this is natural with all, but Campbell's main star was here. Upon the traditions of the past and his own recollections he built little, clinging more to the probable possible to

come, than to what in the past was utterly gone. He also lived more freely, too much so for his health.

Campbell always aspired after what was more perfect, and was disappointed at not finding it. Not at all romantic, he lived less than he once did in the region of fancy, as he grew older ; and, in running after shadows, he became more restless and dissatisfied. He shifted the subject of his studies, when he did study. He often now left books half-perused, to seek new ones, hunting some ideal object never overtaken—ever seeking, and not finding. Often abstracted, he had never mentally travelled towards the elevated in subject, so much as towards the tranquil and beautiful. His selfishness of mind, if I may so call it, prevented him from troubling others with his joys or sorrows. He shrank from rude and stern appearances. He showed no great acquaintance with the deep things of the human heart. He lived among his own fruits and flowers—fruits and flowers of unquestionable loveliness, of which he was the creator, particularly in his “Gertrude.” He once asked me which I liked best of his poems, and I replied, “Gertrude,” and he replied, “So do I.” His better scenes there have a Claude-like beauty, unruffled, sweet, and soothing. He rarely becomes himself identified with his subject, and yet one of his excellencies is, that he treats his subject as no one besides himself could do, in consequence of which Scott made him an exception from the modern poets, whose works, he said, he would undertake to parody. He pleases through his own perception of his subject, rather than of his reader. He delights, rather than astonishes, wooing our admiration with the graces and elegancies of his verse, and that

affectionate tenderness in his "Gertrude," more particularly, which raises analogous pleasure in others, and is, therefore, more enduring in its effect. There are few salient points in his delineations to break the uniformity of their moral grace. Yet there is no coldness—no want of excitement—genius in him vindicates its power to perform what it may require, without those extensive aids, destitute of which the superficial in judgment consider it incapable of acting. The odes of Campbell, worthy of the best days of Greece, were flung off at moments of an impulse, which, from his nature, admitted not of more than momentary action.

I was again absent from London for several years, working hard for the free-trade cause, during which period, if I ran up to town, time pressed upon me so as to allow me to make only a short call upon the poet. When I came back permanently, we visited each other as before, but the poet had then lamentably changed in person, become thinner, and stricken with an unusually aged appearance. I visited him both in Lincoln's Inn Fields, where I once more met the Archdeacon Strachan, of Toronto, now become a bishop, and in Victoria Square, his latest residence in London. The poet took occasion to allude to our old breakfast scene at his house in Upper Seymour Street, West, by saying, "Here, my lord bishop is an old acquaintance of yours, I believe." The doctor was full of good-humour, though priestly as becomes one of the cloth; and the little annoyance I gave him was forgotten. He is since dead.

Before he went to Boulogne to reside, Campbell used to come up to Baker Street, North, where I lodged, to

breakfast, and would generally sit for several hours—the last time, from half-past nine till four o'clock. I saw him just before his departure from England, and shook hands with him for the last time. I had promised to go over to Boulogne and see him; but was prevented. Hearing of his illness, I wrote to inquire how he was. My letter only anticipated his death by two or three days. He sent me through his niece; his “kind remembrances;” they were his last. At his funeral, in Westminster Abbey, I was struck with the recollection that, where the Rev. Mr. Millman read the funeral service at the foot of Dr. Barrow’s monument, Dr. Johnson was seen weeping at the funeral of Garrick, near to whose remains those of Campbell lie, just sixty-five years before.

When I saw the poet laid in that antique locality, I thought it was not the proper place, doing all honour at the same time to the intention of those who so ordered it. His wishes in his better days would have been to lie by the Clyde, covered with the wild flowers of his natal soil. As his body lay in the Jerusalem Chamber, the recognition of those attending the funeral, interrupted the gloomy retrospections, that pressed heavily on my mind. I recalled the poet’s words in St. James’ Street, now verified, that he should go before me to the land of darkness and shadow, of rest and forgetfulness. While the service was reading in the Abbey, my thoughts, for they were not to be restrained by the service, so familiar, with the occasion so rare, my thoughts ran back to an acquaintance and joint labours of nearly thirty years, to labour and relaxation together in social hours, and to individuals who intermingled with all. Many of

these individuals had preceded the poet. Here, then, had terminated, in the customary mode, the history of another who had made himself a never-dying name! Then came a recurrence to scenes, in relation to the perished past, some of which were now known to myself alone. There were the remembrances of conversations and incidents, that, but for such an event as the present, could never, it is probable, have been again drawn from the store-house of memory—things that before seemed nothing, now appeared to be of moment. With these feelings, the funeral spoke indifferently to the eye, on my part, for the mind was in other places and times, travelling among the wrecks of departed years, and with no little poignancy, making even shadowy images turn the past to painful realities. Campbell had once said to me he would die directly for such a fame as that of Napoleon I. I smiled, and told him it was a small temptation to a philosophic mind, to give up time for the insensibility to its gifts. What did it matter now! As the old divine wrote, what does it matter to “our wives, dead and asleep in charnel-houses, they are not troubled when we laugh loudly at the songs sung at the next marriage feast?” Such were my ideas when in the venerable Abbey, amid the dust of the wise and great, I saw the last of my old friend now insensible to fame. A crowd of all degrees in life, whom respect or curiosity had drawn to witness the interment, stood beneath the many-coloured windows, under the pointed arches, reared by the hands of generations long passed away, to witness their own antecedent.

How should I look back without sadness at such a moment—despite all my philosophy and a proper re-

signation to that inevitable course of mundane things, which it has pleased the supreme to allot for human destiny—how should I look back without sadness, upon a long friendship, and labours that strengthened it, with a poet of so high an order. The little failings of his human nature had perished with his body; the fruits of his inspiration were more glorious than ever; the few failings were forgotten and finite; the fruits of his mind imperishable. The burial service, the venerable Abbey, the crowd that attended, the sable bier, none fixed my attention a moment. I became abstracted. The service seemed over, when I thought it had scarcely began. The crowd was dispersing. The world's custom of forgetfulness of him who once breathed life around, had commenced, and Campbell was to be remembered only by a few in his delightful works. Poetry was to change to the fashion of the populace, and to be forgotten with the fashion of the season. Such has since become the order of custom, the science of folly and ignorance. Be it so: the educated few will still preserve the vestal fire. The multitude cannot comprehend the productions of high genius, and can no more permanently depreciate them, than it can fathom the depths of the science which is elevating the intellectual man yet higher above the counterfeit wisdom that masks its existence. By the multitude, a taste like its own motley garb, is assumed to keep up appearances, and

Savoir vivre, c'est savoir peindre.

I left the Abbey, to shut myself up for the day, that I might for a moment be out of the perpetual masquerade. The unavailing nature of the moody thoughts

which haunted me, now came to my aid, and the fact that I must soon lie in the lap of earth, as well as the poet. I went to the British Museum. There I encountered that remarkable bust of C. J. Cæsar, which is so striking. "Is the likeness all that remains of the greatest scholar and conqueror of antiquity?" thought I; "well may humble men bend before the reflection, and write 'Resignation' on their minds."

But I must drop the curtain, lifted prematurely, in relation to the precise order of events, and return to the details of the quick, in place of the dead.

I did not foresee I should be tempted to quit London again; but an offer, which I judged it not prudent to refuse, of going into Staffordshire, was made to me. The locality was the city renowned for a cruel martyrdom of certain saints, if legends are to be credited, more worthily for the literary or professional names of Ashmole, Johnson, Darwin, Garrick, Seward, Harwood, and Salt, in connection with it either by birth or domicile. In that part of Staffordshire, and particularly in Lichfield, the cathedral city, the opposition to what was called "innovation" was indomitable. Sir Robert Peel, at that time, and for some years afterwards, championed against free-trade, "to the knife." The Reform Act had been carried mainly in consequence of his resistance to throwing open the borough of Retford. A member of some note on the Conservative side, said to me, that the only vote he ever repented giving in Parliament, was the vote against a change at East Retford, "for," said he, "had we given way in isolated points, a general reform would not have been carried." The Reform Act then had passed, and the municipal bill had neutralized many sources of

borough influence, when I went into the county. I had just quitted one city where the reform of the representation had taken place, and now my services were sought in another. Somehow, I was destined for uphill work. The municipal reform had made almost as great an alteration in the return of members, as the Parliamentary Reform Bill. There was something too attractive, at such a moment, in the duties I had to perform, under the circumstances, for they were to be carried on in the midst of that "stillness of stagnation," which prevails in places where local intelligence is everything, and the welfare of the entire body of the people is deemed of no moment. It is astonishing how little the interests or welfare of the whole community is regarded in towns of some importance, compared to that of its own petty and obscure circle. We are miserably selfish in our political views, which we conceal under general avowals of the reverse character. In country newspapers, people only desire to see repeated what is happening every day before their eyes. It is only now and then they want an editor. They wish for a record only of what they already know, and seek to learn nothing further. Some, indeed, who are the actors in the scenes described, feel their pride flattered by the hebdomedial notice of their small deeds; but the obscure many can have no such motive, and must be judged in the matter according to the stunted dimensions of their minds, which are content with that which limits their sympathies. Thus, too, many of our country papers take care their readers shall not find in their columns anything that will touch upon the common run of the intellect to which they address themselves. My task

was to arouse the slumberer, and to prevent those opposed to the principles of free-trade from having the laugh wholly on their own side. There was something exciting in such combats for principles. I went down with the same determination with which I went to Bath, not to pay regard to men, but to things. My course, therefore, must have surprized those papers, which, like Sir Pertinax Macsycophant, were accustomed to meet all objections from "great" people, by "booing." It is true I was unlucky in having, both here and at Bath, to commence the undertaking, complete the rough work, organize, and then, when the smother labour came, quit my task, that, having been set going, it might be done cheaper without an editor. No matter, the moment of the battle was mine, and a state of comparative peace would have been less to my taste. Unfortunately, in going away for so long a time to serve a public cause, I severed myself from town connections, of no small private advantage, impossible to be renewed.

Party spirit ran high. The interest of a nobleman who possessed much property in the city, had been successful in the return of one Liberal member. The other was neither Tory, Whig, nor Radical; but as much of either, or of all three, or of neither, as the Close dictated for the time being. The Close meant the cathedral circle, within which the church politico-militant ruled despotically. It was walled, except where a friendly piece of impassable water reflected mitre and shovel-hat alike, on its serene bosom. Three spires overtopped all, from the loftiest of which Lord Brooke was shot. An individual, named Dyott, an ancestor of a family of that name, yet in the vicinity, while it was besieged by the Parliament,

the hreat tower, made an invocation there for good luck to some saint of the upper or nether sphere, and then fired his matchlock, the ball from which, hitting a brick wall, glanced off at an angle, and struck Lord Brooke, mortally. Maister Dyott took great credit for the exploit, though it resembled much the story of shooting at a pigeon and killing a crow. With such "sacred" historical recollections, the holy place was now garrisoned by a dean and his subalterns, defended by canons and serving men, not altogether destitute of cavalry, for horses were kept there, not precisely to lay aside on that hallowed spot, "the sin which doth so easily beset us," but to secure good fortune on the course, by first breathing the air of the saintly enclosure. Long had the holy garrison ruled the city. I was told by one who knew the Sunderland and Anson families well, that both had expended large sums to overturn the influence of the Close, but in vain. It remained a species of clerical Sevastopol. Had they not a "vested right" to return one of the members? The Close might have served for the residence of the hero of the Dunciad, for all the political wit or wisdom it produced at that precise moment. It was a happy exemplification of ecclesiastical idleness, as if from the world being so holy, its admonishers had nothing left to do, but to eat, drink, and sleep. Thus nestled the *superia in delicias cathedra*, brooding over resistance to free-trade and progress. Doubtless, it had once brooded over the enviable days of Charles I. and Laud, some within the precinct flirting occasionally with the scarlet lady, and snatching a stolen Babylonian kiss. The cathedral worship was ill-attended, the people going to their parish churches, in some of

which clergymen of a truly Christian character did the duty.

At that moment Sir Robert Peel, at Drayton in Warwickshire, hard by, was a sturdy protectionist. The northern and southern divisions of Stafford returned an equal force *pro* and *con*. The Honourable G. Anson, and the present Earl Talbot, sat for the southern division. General Sir George Anson and Sir Edward Scott represented Lichfield, which city was in that part of the county, though a city or county in itself, its limits extending seven miles around the Guildhall.

The Anson family had a noble property in and near the city, which, when the late Earl of Lichfield came into it, was one of the finest in the kingdom. Given to play, a propensity which made him his own enemy, for he had no foe but himself in the world, and deserved to have none. He was one of the kindest, best tempered men of his day, a martyr to the tortures of the gout, yet never suffering them to destroy his equanimity. He one day asked me if I could give him a receipt to cure his disorder—he was then drinking red wine at dinner. I told him to drink white wine only, to rise at six o'clock, and ascend and descend the cathedral tower three or four times every morning before breakfast, I would answer for it his gout would vanish. I had known an officer cured by excavating a cave in a rocky cliff, beginning early in the morning.

“I have no doubt of that, Mr. Redding,” he replied, “but I fear the remedy to me would be worse than the disease.”

“Your lordship is the best judge of that,” I observed

"I only give a prescription never known to fail, and one I should be inclined to try, for I hate pain."

"So do I, but I must bear mine."

"That is want of faith."

"No, I dare say it would cure me, but consider what a task it would be."

"I have no other receipt," I replied, "mine was Dr. Franklin's, who cured himself that way."

Sir Charles Wolsely told me that when the earl was a youth at Shuckborough, both the late Lord Lichfield's father and himself had often cautioned him against play. The great navigator, Lord Anson, had a propensity that way, and was plundered by sharpers. It would be curious to know whether the example of the great navigator, and the parental cautions might not have acted as temptations. Stolen water is sweet. What is forbidden in early life most strenuously, becomes afterwards an apple of Eve to us. We long to taste, taste, and fall.

The Duke of Sutherland at Trentham, was little heard of in the county. Lord Harrowby, at Sandon, was then in advanced years. The Earl of Shrewsbury, at Alton Towers, distinguished himself on little but the affairs of the Catholic church, of which he was a member; he was not a strong-minded man. Lord Bagot, of Abbot's Bromley, was not much heard of. Earl Talbot, lord-lieutenant of the county, was considered a good-natured man, devoted to conservative politics. Lord Hatherton, at Teddesley, who succeeded Lord Talbot as lord-lieutenant, was a liberal in politics, an excellent landlord, who understood better than any other individual in the county, how to manage an estate

both as a farmer and landlord, as well as a sound political economist. Lord Wrottesley, then Sir John, I found an urbane business-like gentleman, who was thorough master of the county politics. Last, but not least, among the resident nobility of the county, was the mirror of chivalry and gallant-bearing, the Marquis of Anglesey, at Beaudesert. I have omitted Lord Dartmouth at Sandiwell, a high flyer in politics, furious in faith, and heroic in justice business. There were many old Roman Catholic families in the county. Some families had been residents there almost from the conquest, as the Giffards, Bagots and Wolselys, but all gentle and simple, were pretty equally divided between the Tory and Liberal interests. The obtaining a little local knowledge was my first step. It required activity and attention, for the county was large and populous, but I had introductions to the leading men of all ranks. The magnificent iron trade rendered the traffic and agriculture of the county flourishing. I found political opinions strong in some places, but with a much more tolerant feeling than I expected, or should have found in a county purely agricultural. The dependance of the two interests one upon another, seemed to be openly acknowledged. Birmingham belongs more to Staffordshire than Warwickshire. This last county and Worcestershire seemed to comprehend but little the true state of the relationship of trade to one another, being mostly of the old landed interest.

It is marvellous what wonders a little ink will do spilled judiciously over virgin paper. It will imbue the dead in soul with vitality. Alcohol is water to it as a stimulus with the many in similar times, while, unlike

that distilled liquid, it strengthens the reason, fixes the wavering, daunts the bully, and retains the timid in a useful neutrality. The press re-assures the desponding, and by its arguments prevents people from seeing things as if through a blanket. The animal spirits become cheered by the simple consciousness of sustentation, where reasoning would not be of service.

The paper was performing its duty, when the people resolved to have a representative of their own, in place of Sir Edward Scott, who feared to declare himself "to be or not to be," the slave of the Close. That spot was now left to its own resources. It was not included within the city until the Reform Bill passed, but it had ruled notwithstanding. Prior to that time the party created forty shilling annuitants, and bought burgesses to swamp the legal votes. At one time they used to desire some nobleman, one of the Gower family, for example, to recommend them members. Efforts were made in vain to emancipate the voters. The good citizens now determined to try and return a second member in right earnest. They had made the attempt once before and failed. The municipal bill having passed, they had now a newspaper, whatever were its demerits, fearless and uninfluenced, to support their cause. It was a stirring time all over the nation from the effect of the parliamentary and municipal measures. Lord Lichfield having come down to command his regiment of yeomanry, I was requested to tell him of the determination of the citizens. I called upon him, and a long conversation ensued, in which, referring to the past contests for nearly a century, he stated that no

influence had been able to resist the artillery of the Close. He did not deem success possible. I represented that the municipal bill having passed, the case was greatly altered. He was still incredulous. What instructions he might have given to his agents in consequence was not so clear, as they themselves were, from similar doubts or some other cause, cold upon the matter. A proper candidate was to be found, and a particular individual who had met the views of the leading citizens was sought, but was absent from his domicile. While this matter was debating, I suggested one of Lord Anglesey's family. It was answered they had thought of that, but there was no son of the marquis at home except Lord George, who was not of age. The people would not have a member who had any property and influence in the town, while to meet other points it was desirable the candidate should belong to the aristocracy. Lord Anglesey had no property in Lichfield. I mentioned Lord Alfred Paget. It was objected that he was off Lisbon with his father on a pleasure excursion. That objection was over-ruled by the town clerk, Mr. Simpson, who was the soul of the affair, saying Lord Alfred might be represented on the canvass by his younger brother. The family was written to, and consented to his nomination. A brisk canvass commenced, and on the third day Sir Edward Scott bolted from the course, and left the Close in consternation. Lord Lichfield had returned to town, but I did not lose a post in letting him know that his own prognostications to me in St. James' Square and elsewhere, were not verified, and he was highly pleased.

The vested rights of the Close, as they fancied them, were gone, and for ever. The Liberal principles of Lord Alfred Paget were those of the citizens, they only covenanted that his lordship should support the ballot on account of the protection it would afford to the poorer voters, for mechanics had been turned out of employment on voting for him, or work taken away from them. Some went to Australia in consequence. This was not done without exposure of the parties in the paper, nor did I suffer any consideration to stifle an expression of indignation at such proceedings. The Hon. George Anson was opposed for the county, and run close. Peel gave five hundred pounds towards the expences of the colonel's adversary. The Lichfield election quickly over, I went to Wolverhampton. I found Colonel Anson awaiting the result with great equanimity. Every moment, as the balloting papers came in from different polling-places in the division, now making the result even, now adverse, it became a period of great excitement. I never saw any one behave in a calmer manner. Colonel Anson spoke so well, that I have often thought he might have made a figure in Parliament, superior to most men who sit there.

The Hon. C. P. Villiers and Mr. Thornley were safe in their seats for Wolverhampton. I visited Walsall, where Mr. Finch was successful; nor must I forget Tamworth, where Sir Robert Peel, secure in his own election, had declared he would not interfere in the case of a second candidate. Captain Townsend, R.N., now Marquis Townsend, had started for the second seat, and was opposed by Mr. A'Court, for whom Sir Robert's committee, with one or two names only

changed, was acting, which Captain Townsend interpreted into an interference by Sir Robert, in the face of his avowal that he would not do so. This produced an altercation and explanations. I was much struck with Sir Robert's want of tact, as to matter and manner, in presence of such an audience. He addressed clod-hopping farmers and rustics precisely as he would speak in the House of Commons. When the election was over, the friends of the defeated candidate had a dinner at the Town-hall, in Tamworth—the candidate in the chair. The captain had a great desire to sit for Tamworth; the castle, belonging to his family, seemed to bring touchingly into his mind, the recollections of the past. When Sir Robert Peel became a free-trader, some years afterwards, the captain was gratified, and he sat for Tamworth. Among the speakers on that occasion, I was one, who unworthily delivered myself in Tamworth Hall, at some length, on the captain's side.

It was at this same election, that Sir Robert Peel produced a great laugh on the hustings at Tamworth. I have observed that he did not raise or lower himself according to the class of his auditory; he appeared to be destitute of the power of adaptation, and seemed insensible to effects that other speakers would have foreseen and avoided. Sir Robert said he had been charged with coercing his tenantry; then, with singular deficiency of tact, he singled out among the people beneath, a chubby-faced man, with a countenance of superlative vacancy, one of his tenants. The effect was ludicrous.

“I never coerced my tenantry. There is Peter Bird, one of my tenants; did I ever coerce you, Peter Bird?”

“No, Sir Robert, you never did,” said humble Peter, in a whining tone, which caused a general cachinnation, coupled with the expression of the man’s face, none could help laughing aloud.

I was then using my pen pretty strongly against Sir Robert, and wrote two or three stanzas on the subject, which the people got hold of, and with which they saluted round-faced Peter whenever he came to Tamworth market.* I met Sir Robert Peel in Baker Street, afterwards, and fancied there was a smile brought up by his recollection of the foregoing occurrence; but Sir Robert had then become a free-trader.

I had many opportunities of observing this lamented statesman in the country, and there recurs to my mind little regarding him, to account for the political course he pursued in the latter part of his life. One observation I made while resident near him, was that he had no great love for the aristocracy. The observation was recalled to my mind ten years afterwards, when his will was made public, as having been remarked to some gentlemen at Lichfield. It would be useless to recount the grounds on which I came to that conclusion, but I was right, without imagining my conjecture would be so well proved. I judged from what I had observed in a five years’ residence in his vicinity.

Old Sir Robert Peel was an acute money-scraping man, an enemy to the corn-law while his son supported it.

* One stanza I recollect ran:

“O where is the tenant will say I have threatened him?

I’ve tenants enough in the crowd there below—

Peter Bird, did I threaten you ever, my Peter?”

“Did you threaten me? Never—O no, my love no.”

Two stories will illustrate his character: Colonel Peel, then, who was much and deservedly respected, kept race-horses during his father's life-time, and the old gentleman frequently remonstrated with him on the subject in vain. "You cannot afford to keep them. What a heavy expense they must be! Why don't you turn them into Drayton Park, the grass is growing to waste there? The man to whom I let it has gone off without paying me."

The son turned in his horses, and they were seized by the father for the rent due from the previous occupier. So, when the Tamworth bank had a run upon it, Sir Robert went behind the counter, and paid the notes himself. When this was observed, the country-people said, "Oh! there is the rich Sir Robert Peel paying away the money himself—I shan't take out mine." "Nor I," said another; "nor I," said a third. In less than a year afterwards, the bank broke, and much injured the people in the neighbourhood; but the old gentleman had no assets there. "My father was a plain man of business," said the late minister. "He never aspired to anything beyond it."

The change of Sir Robert Peel on the Catholic Question was singular. It is possible his final decision was effected by the influence of the Duke of Wellington, who swept away the barriers of intolerance, and made everything subservient to the due proceeding of the "Queen's business," as he used to phrase it. He did not exhibit a relish for the Lady of Babylon any more than Sir Robert; but, having averred that knowing its miseries, "he would rather lay down his life than see six weeks' civil war in Ireland," it was natural he should pay small attention to the ana

themas of Sir Harcourt Lees and his Orangemen, on one side the water, or to the groans of Eldon and his friends, on the other. Sir Robert, educated in the narrow school of Perceval, had now to unlearn the lessons of a long official life, and to act according to circumstances. The Orangemen had been his friends and supporters. The Duke's judgment decided according to the exigencies of the moment, for he regarded only the nation at large. Peel had followed the routine party, even after he had confessed the necessity of the measure, and resisted it. He had belonged to an intractable school, and could not, till too near the painful end of his career, divest himself of early errors, inculcated by education and party—those rulers of our destiny for good or evil. Everyone knows how difficult it is to eradicate a dogma in mature age, that has been long previously a favourite, however truth and reason may show its fallacy. Sir Robert Peel did not possess a mind that grasped truth intuitively. He was not profound, nor original, but timely and practical. He had much to gain, with the difficult task of overcoming early and deep-rooted prejudices in the very teeth of reproving partizans. On the question of free-trade, it was a self sacrifice, as before; but here there was the conviction of being right in place of the reluctant assent. His subsequent conduct spoke this fact. His speeches on the question showed a sincerity he had not exhibited on the Catholic Question, or on popular occasions before. "We love the treason, but detest the traitor," said an M.P. free-trader. Now, what was called treason to his own party, was an enormous boon to his country; and all the world knows that Sir Robert's party cared little

for him or the country. They cared only for themselves. If they had seen it self-advantageous, they would have flung him overboard without ceremony. Those who reprobated, slandered, and vituperated him most in Parliament, had been most conspicuous for their tergiversations. Notorious noonday apostates, as they were, ready to share the crumbs from a minister's table, of any party, for an inch of place and power, they played off the buffoonery of Aristophanes against Socrates, with no augmentation of credit to themselves. Peel exhibited a dissent from all personal aims. He proved the truth of his convictions by the resignation, to an extent few ministers held before him, of a power, a tithe of which would have bought over his enemies. Was not this a proof of an honest, if a late, conviction? The man who lays down the government of a great people for the public benefit, is a great character, and justly entitled to the popular gratitude.

When Peel committed this crime of sacrificing power on the altar of his country, as his enemies have it—for it was a crime to their selfish optics—he, had for the first time, become a primary in place of a secondary. In addition to a defective political education, where obedience was the habit, and his mind credited anything without questioning, he was become responsible for all. He was not by nature a man of genius, to strike out new lights. His tendencies were never precedent, but consequential. In plentitude of power, conviction flashed upon him. He found himself in a new era—an age of new necessities—amid a generation with more enlightened views, than when he served his apprenticeship to stale political rules. He acquired the full conviction of

the necessity of a certain line of duty being necessary ; and this was the more noble part of his conduct, when, that conviction becoming clear, he cast all save his country's good to the winds. But his political friendships ? He estimated them just at the value they showed they were worth. His old tenets ? He mistook their solidity ; we all err in our judgments upon an occasion. He betrayed those who selected him for a leader ? The selection was a proof of his superior judgment ; they should have followed him. Treachery ? An army that forsakes its chief is mutinous ; he is not treacherous, they, not he, lapse in duty. Then the sacrifice was his own ; himself, place, long-cherished views, power that all men court, laid upon the altar of his country. Only ignoble minds denominated the sacrifice unworthy. Sir Robert felt he must stoop to conquer. What ?—not a short term of power, that accident or caprice might destroy—a popular alarm—a prejudice—a church and king yell—or a two shilling loaf—no, not a chance medley tenure, but a name to be long fresh in his country's history, when the form and pressure of the time should be no longer traceable. Perhaps he felt this heroic truth—I hope so. He did not reveal his feelings. His temperament was chill, abstracted, reserved. He had no power of attachment, and could not win hearts. Perhaps he had felt how little society will do spontaneously for the most ardent combatant in its cause ; and, therefore, voluntarily abandoning the use of the common, time-worn political machinery, he bequeathed his character and motives to be judged by posterity, as his exceeding great reward.

I write thus full on the subject, because, for above

four years, near his own mansion, I had not a few opportunities of knowing something of Sir Robert Peel, where he was at times imperious, and, then more kindly in his manners. I heard of him from friends and foes, tenants and neighbours, when he was so earnest against the great measure he afterwards supported, and I did not spare his hostility in my comments. Indeed, a noble lord, yet alive, said to me in the country—"I cannot help laughing at what you say about Peel; are you not going too far?" I replied: "I hope nothing personal will fall from my pen. As to sparing the arguments of a political character, publicly uttered, it is idle; Sir Robert Peel, or any one else, is upon a level in this respect. It is of little use to write unless what you say is of a character to make an impression. There can be no verbal compromise."

I thought Sir Robert the last man to make the noble sacrifice he did for his country's good. So opposed and so obnoxious was Sir Robert in Staffordshire, where the free-trade question was well understood by the people at an early period, that he could not venture to speak at a nomination of the members for South Staffordshire; and the Lichfield constables seized persons who had carried stones in their pockets, for the purpose of throwing, as the hustings were on a grassy spot. Seven or eight years afterwards, the people would have taken the horses from his carriage, meeting him with cheers. There was not a workman but well understood the question of free-trade; and many of the farmers were very reasonable upon it, knowing the value of the manufacturing districts as their best market.

While at Bath, in the field beyond his kitchen garden,

I once saw Mr. Beckford alone with the instrument used for cutting up thistles. He was busily employed in this kind of labour. When I came up to him, I said that I had never read that Caliph Vathek was given to rustic labours; that, in the East, I imagined their gardens were formal luxuries. He said he had no idea of their style, but nothing could excel our English planting and fancy gardening; our woods and plantations were superior things. Speaking of woods, he added—"If you ever go into Derbyshire, see the woods of Ilam; I remember the impression they made upon me in early life." I used to attend meetings at Uttoxeter connected with county business, and thought I would see the woods of Ilam. The road was pleasant, and one day I determined to prolong it to Ashbourn, a place noted for the best malt and worst ale in England. It was not far from Ilam that the swift river Dove runs in its own romantic country, dividing Staffordshire from Derby. I first explored Dovedale. Romantic as it is, I think the pale blue colour of the rocks and waters there does not set them off to advantage. It is a singular solitude, far more interesting than Matlock. The streams of water at the opening of the dale, deep, narrow, and covered with broad-leaved aquatic plants, were new and pleasing. I crossed a number of little brooks, for which Derby is famous, no doubt full of the fish—the trout—in which good old Isaac Walton delighted, and for which the Peak is noted. I found the woods of Ilam fine, and a number of sweet places for meditation in the summer season were hard by. People flock to watering-places in the room of more attractive scenes. I was loth to leave a

spot so soothing, silent, and tranquil, at war with busy life, a haunt for meditation. The woods, separate from the vale scenery, did not appear to exceed many others in this country. After scenes in North Wales and the West of England, these struck me as being compact and snug—all on a less scale. Cheddar, in Somersetshire, has much of the character of Dovedale. I also visited the Shropshire side of the county, and ascended the Wrekin, from which the summit of Cader Idris, in Wales, is visible, faint and grey, from distance. I was much pleased, too, with the higher course of the Severn, which runs to the sea without an impediment almost all the way from its source. At Bridgnorth its sweep, after passing Colebrookdale downwards, round half the town, is majestic. I saw Moore's old residence, near Ashbourn, which the people did not seem to value in memory as the residence of a poet.

I made one at the opening of Oscot Catholic College, between Lichfield and Birmingham, which had been just completed. I had an invitation from Dr. Weedal, the principal, an ecclesiastic of extensive acquirements and liberal opinions, who evinced towards me, on more than one occasion, the greatest politeness and confidence. Sir Charles Wolsely drove me over. I have lived too long not to discriminate between bigots in Catholic as well as Protestant churches, and those who have partaken in the advancement of the times under both creeds. I have lived among Catholics abroad, who never troubled me about my creed, nor did I them about theirs. That is the secret of peace, I believe. On the present occasion, a pontifical high mass was celebrated by a bishop and six clergymen. The "Kyrie"

from Mozart, and the "Gloria" were sung; then a sermon was delivered by the principal. The music performed was mostly from Haydn and Mozart. The whole was impressive. I also attended an examination of the pupils, who were classed according to the date of sojourn in the college. There were examinations in Latin and English, in philosophy, rhetoric, poetry, history, and grammar. There were arithmetical examinations from common addition to algebra, and one in sacred literature, beginning with the necessity of revealed religion, and so down to early Catholicism, and the tenets of its church. The method of teaching was far more liberal than that in our old grammar schools. The sciences were not neglected, and connected, as much as possible, with situations where the pupils could be in contact with the objects of their studies. Botany and natural history, for example, being taught, when the weather admitted, in the open fields.

Having received an invitation from Mr. Phillips to Grace Dieu Manor, Leicestershire, I went over there to see the ceremony of the consecration of a new church. I believe young Henry Wolsely, of Wolsely, and myself, were the only Protestants present. That part of the ceremony which took place in the open air, reminded me of some scenes in old paintings. The day was fine; the rich colouring of the dresses of the ecclesiastics, and bishop *in pontificalibus*, the cross borne in front, all slowly pacing round the church, chanting the fiftieth psalm, the prelate sprinkling the walls, and reciting the part of the service which begins, "Asperge me domine hyssopo et mundabor," was peculiarly fine and striking. I fancied myself carried back to Catholic

times—in the middle ages—to the days when our fathers, prostrate in mind and body alike, before a religion of ceremonies, were content to be obedient. I do not wonder at the numerous converts made to the papal church, when the rites are so attractive and splendid. It is most assuredly the religion of the eyes.

I paid a visit to Bardon Hill, and the monastery of La Trappe, placed nearly upon its summit. The brothers came from Meillerie, for some unexplained reason being compelled to leave France. The prior was an agreeable and well-instructed personage, the Rev. Mr. Wolfrey. The brethren were simple-minded men. The site of the monastery was on one of the most barren spots of ground conceivable, covered with rock and wiry grass. It had been given or let to them for a very long term, by the owner, Sir G. Beaumont. No English farmer would have looked at the land, nor accepted it as a gift, high, miserable, and exposed as it was. The buildings were compact, not extensive, and very plain, except the chapel, which was remarkably neat, but without costliness. At an hour after midnight, the brothers of the order assembled at prayers, and worshipped for some hours, until breakfast, after which they worked, with an hour's interval to dine. They went to bed at eight o'clock. An entrance, unornamented, led into a species of court, the chapel being on the right-hand side going in, and the dormitory over the refectory, on the left. The latter had small plain deal tables, with seats next the walls. Over each seat was an inscription in black letters, taken from some passage in the scriptures. The brothers never took animal food. Vegetables, eggs, fruit, butter, cheese, milk, and wine, the

latter from their place in France, comprised the material of their meals. They were also allowed fish. They had beer ; and made their own bread. They did not wear any particular dress outside the walls, where those brethren laboured diligently, who were accustomed to out-door work. Others, who had no trade, were instructed in one, for there was no idleness within the walls, nor, indeed, outside, as was clear, from the wonderful change they had effected by their labour in that barren land. No woman was ever permitted to pass the gate. The story of the brethren being forbidden to converse is not true, unless they had special license from the superior ; on the day I saw them I had much conversation, and found no restraint, except that, when I mounted the stairs to the dormitory, one of the brothers requested I would not speak there, as no human voice was ever to be heard in the apartment. The sleeping-places resembled the boxes on the sides of a coffee-room, supposing the bedding to occupy and fill up the whole space where the table is usually placed in each box. The beds were of coarse sackcloth, or some similar stuff, filled with chaff. There lay upon each of them a leathern girdle and buckle, with which, I presumed, they girt on this blanket at night ; but of this I am not certain, as I could not ask questions in that voiceless apartment. One of the brothers was named Bernard, another Augustin. Two were absent, collecting aid from the faithful for the support of their establishment. Many stories told of them are untrue, but their order is very self-denying. The prior told me that few of the brethren were lettered men, but all worked hard, and were of good character. They were rigid in abiding by their rules. They all looked healthy on the bleak

spot where their habitation stood exposed to every cutting blast. I shuddered at the thought of their midnight prayers in winter, in their chapel, amid ice and snow. On the whole, the establishment and its rules were not so repulsive as report made them, at least nothing that I saw was so, and I visited every nook through the whole extent of the establishment. They had some books and work for in-door employment; they also read the newspapers. The prior told me he could not conjecture why they were expelled from France. They had never interfered with politics, nor with anything beyond their own walls.

It may be judged a matter of difficulty, for one circumstanced as I was, to steer clear of displeasing parties in the midst of conflicting religious opinions. I advocated perfect freedom, and took no part myself in any dispute that was not strictly lay, believing that the verb to tolerate implies a power of intolerance somewhere, and that the right to believe from conviction is inherent, and implies the right to disbelieve. I got, perhaps, the love of none for not playing the advocate of any, but of all; yet, I imagine, I secured their respect.

Sir Charles Wolsely, of Wolsely Hall, the well known radical, had embraced the Catholic faith. His family had been settled at Wolsely from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, one branch had gone to Ireland and settled at Wolsely Bridge there. He had known in Milan my old friend Count Porro, and invited me over to the hall, within a few yards of the Trent, one of the most charming situations in the county. The high road from Rugeley to Stafford separated the deer park from the land near the baronet's house. This last had

four fronts of about ninety feet each, turretted at the angles. The style imitation gothic. We had many discussions upon open trade, in which I found Sir Charles one of the old school, and no free trader. I told him I thought he was a liberal. He said he had supported the cause of the people, for they had been shamefully treated by a domineering faction down to the time of the Reform Bill. When that bill had passed, he had nothing more to do with politics, but as far as in him lay to see that the intentions of the law were fulfilled. He had laboured all he could in the popular cause, had suffered for it, and should do so again if it were necessary. He told me that Sir Francis Burdett was a man of no sincerity, that when some poor men were arrested, who had got within the gripe of justice-law for what was really no crime at all, he offered to bail them, Sir Francis being with him at that moment, one of whose strong addresses had led to the mischief. Sir Francis refused to join him in getting the poor fellows their freedom. He, from that moment, thought Sir Francis had done all he had solely from the love of notoriety and nothing else. He was full of vanity, and had nothing sterling about him.

Walking with Sir Charles one morning by the Trent, he pointed to some meadows which were thrown upon his hands. "Yes, Sir Charles, but you let them from year to year. Who will improve land on that tenure? Give your tenant a lease, and you will have no trouble."

"Yes, and have the land worked out."

"Not at all," I replied, "there is Sir Robert Peel, who has some odd notions about land, gives leases. The old plan won't do now. The land would be

improved at the end of the lease, and you would get a higher rent."

Here the old aristocratical prejudice was evident. Then a railway, no great distance from the hall, had caused the inn at Wolsely Bridge to be closed, by which he lost a hundred a year rent. I advised him to convert it into a dwelling-house, the site was charming, and I endeavoured to comfort him by stating that the conveyance by rail must be a great boon to the agricultural interest. I argued that rents had doubled, and people lived better than they ever did before. He seemed to think the manufacturers had taken a slice from the landed interest. I asked him where was there such a market for agricultural produce as Wolverhampton and the iron districts. "Ask Lord Hatherton, who understands this question better than any other proprietor in Staffordshire, if this is not the correct doctrine."

"How then was it the landholders were so poor?"

I replied because they cultivated the land as they did of old, and would not, as they might, improve it to a double production.

"I can show you my family books," said Sir Charles, "I remember my grandfather kept his four black coach horses, a couple of hacks for himself, and half a dozen hunters, besides others. I cannot do that. Cobden perhaps could."

He told me he became a Catholic from conviction, and was not required to go through any ceremony on the occasion in the chapel at Tixall. A neighbouring clergyman, however, made a point of anathematizing, Sunday after Sunday, all the people in the parish who

were not of his own creed, and, therefore, he determined on making his abjuration openly, that Protestant and Catholic, of which there were many near, might discuss it. I several times went, with Sir Charles and Miss Wolsely, to a nunnery of ladies of fortune, at Colwich, about a mile distant, of a Sunday before dinner, to hear the benediction sweetly sung, seated in the nuns' parlour. I do not think I ever heard more charming devotional singing. This solemn service was always over by seven o'clock.

He was sincere in his opinions. On leaving Staffordshire to visit Italy, while I was in the county, he wrote to me from London, dated St. James' Place.

“ Dear Redding,

“ I was so perplexed with business before I left, that I had not time to write to you. Pray send me one of your papers, if not two, if you think you have made a good critique which will suit the Pope and the Cardinals, I will then procure you absolution—unconditionally! Send one to Henry, and then if there is anything that will please the propaganda, he will forward it! I have not been once down at the club, so that I have heard no news.

“ I believe about Rugeley they will miss me, for before I left, I gave up to Mr. G—— seven acres of potatoe ground, to let seventy-five per cent cheaper than the usual rent there. They make exactly fifty gardens for the poor, to be let indiscriminately to Catholics as well as Protestants. This will make the shovel-hat put on another cock—for it will be sending his parishioners

for favours to the Catholic priest—*tempora mutantur!*
Adieu,

“Yours sincerely,

“C. WOLSELY.”

Speaking of the wisdom of our fathers as to law, he showed me the grant to his ancestors of a deer-leap for his park, dated in the reign of Edward II. in latin, about nine inches long, and four fingers wide, enough to throw a modern conveyancer into hysterics. One of the Wolselys had been a Baron of the Exchequer in 1300, and a descendant of this baron held the same office in the time of Edward IV. After I had quitted Staffordshire, in one of his letters he said, “Do you know Louis Bonaparte? what is that clever fellow about? He has got his two uncles in London, Murat’s son, and some old French officers, and if I am not mistaken, has an eye upon France. I bet either he or Henri against the Duke of Orleans when Louis Phillipe dies. At any rate there will be a try for it—that is my opinion. When I go to town I shall try and scrape acquaintance with him. He would have frightened the present government of France, had he got possession of Strasburgh. He was within an ace of it. What will your friend Peel do if Wellington goes off the stage before him?” This is a singularly prophetic letter, bearing date February 25, 1840. Sir Charles died in 1846, aged 78, a hale active man nearly to the last, and a protectionist I fear. He was undoubtedly a singular individual, energetic and straightforward in what he thought right. He was struck off the list of justices of the peace by Eldon, and the Whigs evaded

restoring him. The late Lord Talbot declared that he was no impediment, as lord-lieutenant, and would do it with pleasure, but the deprivation having been the act of a chancellor, he had not authority to replace him. He once rode over all the way to Wolverhampton to meet the Honourable C. P. Villiers at my cottage at breakfast, whom he had a great desire to know. I was indebted to him for sundry haunches of fine venison. There were some beautiful landscape views from different points of his park, particularly over the Trent towards Shuckborough.

The paper having accomplished all that was possible at Lichfield was moved to Wolverhampton, and, in part, a new proprietary formed. There was no trade at Lichfield. The former was a place of much business, waxing rich and populous, but by no means so agreeable a residence as the latter city. The paper increased in circulation, but lost much of its county character. I have omitted to state that at Lichfield I wrote a "Life of William IV." for a London house. It was undertaken in anticipation of the king's death, finished, sent up to town and published so close upon the event that I never saw a proof. I laboured day and night upon it, besides doing my customary amount of other duty. It was published anonymously.

Marshal Soult, accompanied by Sir William Napier, whom I had the pleasure of knowing, stopped an hour or two at Wolverhampton to inspect the iron works of Mr. Barker, a leading ironmaster, on their way to the Menai Bridge. The printer told me that Sir William had enquired for me, but unluckily I was at the moment of their unexpected arrival soliloquizing at

Bushbury, far from the noisy town. As Wilson translates, to—

Where neither suffering comes, nor woes,
To vex the genius of repose,
On death's majestic shore.

In other words, I had taken a lone walk to that distant churchyard, and was copying quaint epitaphs, and I thus missed seeing Sir William. Twenty-two years before I had seen the marshal at morning parades with other celebrated soldiers, attending the Bourbons. A score of years had now nearly extinguished the royal race, to the regret of few but their dependants. The History of the Peninsular War, by Sir William Napier, is the only true military history we possess. The battles are given with uncommon clearness of detail. Thiers is praised for his details of combats, but if his land battles are not more correctly given than his naval, they are miserably defective. I translated the first seven volumes of his history, and am tolerably master of his details. I was told by an officer of the Guards, that Sir William Napier was favoured by Wellington with the loan of his papers relative to the Peninsular War, and that some one saying to the duke that Sir William was a radical, he replied, "What of that, he will tell the truth, which is all I want." I have heard, too, that the duke said Southey's History of the Peninsular War would do for the history of any war. This confirms me in what I never mentioned in print before, that Southey's Life of Nelson, so much lauded at one time, is full of inexcusable blunders, showing that he knew little more of naval affairs than the critics who declared it the finest modern biography we possess.

When a youth I had read Shenstone with delight. Delias and Strephons were then the order of the day. I was now near the Leasowes, and having gone into the church of Hales Owen and seen the poet's modest tomb, and that so much more pretending of Major Haliday, a subsequent possessor of the Leasowes, I continued my way on foot down to where a green lane on the right hand conducts to the precinct marked as the spot consecrated by genius. I found the place in possession of the anti-poetic family of Atwood. Across what were once the great fish ponds of the Abbey of Hales Owen, constituting the attraction of the place, a huge canal embankment has been reared, entirely destroying the view and ruining the charm to which all else was subsidiary. Inscriptions here and there remained, and the building, designed to represent a ruin on the right hand near the entrance, was now in greater perfection than ever, time having clothed it thickly with verdure. Shenstone's house was long ago demolished, and a new, but plain, edifice erected on its site. All, however, was upon a small scale, which genius made interesting. Even the rigidity of Johnson softened before the exquisite tenderness and simplicity of some of the poet's verses.

Major Haliday had a daughter to whom Henry Wolsely, the younger brother of Sir Charles, whom I have already mentioned, formed an attachment. She was an heiress. They agreed to elope. Henry had stowed the lady, abigail, and luggage safely in a carriage and four, at the witching hour of the night. Away they drove uninterruptedly until they arrived about half way between Birmingham and Litchfield, when the

postillions were ordered to stop by thieves. The carriage and lovers were plundered of their money and effects, in this peril, expecting pursuit from the family, they reached Lichfield in a forlorn state. Time was lost in endeavouring to get money to proceed, which at that hour, after great delay, was achieved ; the runaways treading on thorns all the time. Love lent them aid. They contrived to pursue their way baggageless to their destination without being overtaken. Their trunks and such of their effects as the robbers did not choose to carry off, were afterwards found over the hedge in a field adjoining the road. Never was any accident more untoward.

I did not leave Hagley unvisited. It is a fine seat, undoubtedly, but there are others in my view equal to it in the sister counties. Beaudesert is much more princely, but it wants the foliage of Hagley—the “shades of Hagley,” as Lord Littleton wrote it. It was necessary I should sometimes visit the surrounding towns. It was then I availed myself of all worthy sight-seeing. Even the maiden castle of Ashby-de-la-Zouch did not escape me. At Burton I used to lunch with old Sir John Foster, on my desultory and rambling way. He was the Marquis of Anglesey’s agent for Burton on Trent, which place returned a rent roll of twenty-two thousand a year, Sir John at his death was succeeded by Mr. Richardson. The Trent flows very sweetly by the town, and perhaps contributes to the excellence of Bass’s ale.

I was amused by a new theological dispute. The hatred of theologists to each other, has long been proverbial, one of the strongest proofs that neither

party is right, if the sacred volume goes for anything. In that there is but one ladder to heaven, which is charity, with all due respect to old Jacob. The assumption of right by both parties may generally be taken as a proof of wrong, reason being by both treated as if its eyes were out. A Roman Catholic priest went to the funeral of one of his congregation in a Spanish cloak, such as may often be seen worn in the streets of London in winter. Heaven knows I no more credit transubstantiation than that chalk is cheese, or that the Yankee Joseph Smith, the Latter Day Saint impostor, found gold plates in a language that never existed. Yet I can forgive those who through fallibility of understanding are credulous enough to make similar things matters of conscientious belief. But to my tale. The priest followed his disciple's coffin to the burying ground at the Protestant church in a Spanish cloak. The rector or vicar persuaded his attorney, or the attorney persuaded the rector or vicar, I forget which, that the priest was breaking the Emancipation Act, which enacts that no priest shall wear his canonicals in processions out of his church or chapel. Letter after letter came to me on this desecration of the churchyard by popish garments. The priest must be indited. The proper documents were laid before the Bishop of Lichfield, an excellent prelate, who would have dismissed the matter, but he had no choice. He was obliged to request Lord Normanby to institute an enquiry. The good bishop died in the midst of the affair. Here the matter had dropped, but the priest was seen again with the horrible papal garment on his shoulders. The prosecution was renewed. It became

whispered about, at last, that the garment was not canonical at all. The spirit of vengeance was stifled by its own ignorance, and the pitiable, ridiculous, laughable affair terminated. Such disputes remind one, as to triviality, of those described by Canning, as occupying the fathers—the settlement of how many angels could dance upon the point of a fine needle without jostling each other.

The members for Wolverhampton in parliament, were the Honourable C. P. Villiers and T. Thornley, Esq., both ardent advocates for free trade. The former may be said to have first embodied the question in parliament, and led the front of the battle. Mr. Cobden came in second, and obtained more of the praise than he merited, though the desire of Sir Robert Peel to give to Manchester all praise in the way of conciliation, or rather so, I believe, than to a member of the aristocracy. Earnest, well read on the question, eloquent, and gentlemanly, never intrusive on the patience of the house, Villiers obtained its ear before Cobden became the champion, interested as well in pocket as in principle in the measure. The constituency of Wolverhampton clung to their representatives, for they were really their choice. There is a straightforwardness in the inhabitants and workmen of the iron districts over the cotton workers, of course I do not include the colliers in either category. I have never known a more correct and constitutional intercourse to exist between a very large constituency, in which there must be many shades of opinion, and its representatives in parliament, than that of Wolverhampton.

I have not noticed the “potteries,” a district till

recently little spoken about in other parts of England, an astonishing evidence of the extent and skill of British industry. There was a strike among the men, and I believe they had justice on their side. With that feeling it was impossible to convince them they were acting foolishly. Abstract truth is always supposed, by the ignorant, to be capable of realization, and justice to be attainable because injustice is felt. They cannot be convinced, were that the case the world would be perfect, and that human life is destined, for all we know, to be never more than a race towards realization without the attainment. "I told them that they spent large sums of money, and suffered great straits, thinking to force their masters to measures which they might not choose to adopt. Their masters could live without labour ten times as long as they could. Their masters could take their manufactories elsewhere. Their being right gave them nothing more than the moral power; and the physical, which might have no regard to the moral, would beat them, as it did everywhere in similar cases. I advised them to go to work, save their money, and beat their masters by establishing a manufactory themselves, the profits of which would establish more. They admitted that it would answer, and that the idea was not new, but impracticable. Why? Because they could not trust one another, and if they could they would disagree about management, there would be defalcations. Then, my good Sirs, if you cannot trust one another, there is end of the matter. You may drive the trade elsewhere and starve yourselves and families, but you cannot gain what you want by strikes. You may by

integrity. Many of the honest men saw this, but where the multitude rules at its own wild will, wisdom is scared. Yet a part of the press affects to credit the infallibility of the multitude, in rectitude, judgment, and capacity for government. The waters, it is true, have expanded in our day; they have increased in superficies, but not in volume. This may continue, but nature has confined wisdom and discretion to the few, for like genius these will ever be spare and peculiar gifts.

While on this topic, I wanted a professional instrument, difficult to make, and went over to Birmingham for the purpose of obtaining it. I was told only one man there could make it. I got his address, entered a narrow passage into a small square dingy court, and mounted a step ladder into a sort of loft. There I saw a middle-aged, plain, working man reading a newspaper, a curious silver tool lay before him. He told me he had lost nearly all the morning trying to find out its use. He was not content to do his work and get his money, he should learn nothing that way, and he did not like to be foiled. He told me he could do what I wanted, or else he believed I must send to London. I was surprised, as I thought anything could be made in Birmingham. He replied:

“We have capital men here, but they can only do one thing. They cannot invent, to add but a little, if that little is new to them.”

“Then they are only able to execute what they have learned?”

“In the best or worst manner, according to the price, and to improve it when carefully directed how,

but they cannot go out of the way. We have not one inventor or improver to a thousand working men—not to ten thousand.”

“Then you do not think the advancement of the times has increased the inventive faculty?”

“I do not think it has—but the advance of the times has made us perfect in many things, that till now could not be executed.”

“You mean that you dare more now?”

“Yes, Mr. Watt knew of high pressure steam, so did Hornblower, but neither dared to use it—we do use it—as you know in every railroad engine, and even in mines.”

“How is that?”

“Because our tools are more perfect, and we carry workmanship and castings to a size and perfection of which they did not dream.”

“In the same things?”

“Yes, workmanship was rude sixty years ago to what it is now.”

“Then in the workmanship lies the great improvement?”

“Yes, we can now perfect inventions, that were long laid by as impracticable for want of more perfect tools and higher skill in finishing. Things common now were then thought impracticable.”

“Who are the best workmen of all the three kingdoms?”

“Englishmen, for nice finish.”

“Mr. Watt said that no Scotchman ever becomes a first-rate artisan—is that true of his countrymen?”

“Well, I believe it is; our finishers are mostly Eng-

lish ; we have one or two nice French hands at fancy things."

This man satisfactorily completed what I wanted him to do. He was continually consulted about difficult matters, yet he did not make money proportionable to his abilities. He had to think as well as work, and that was the impediment. Thinking required leisure, and leisure gained him no direct profit. People applied to him in difficult cases only. No instructions could have formed him : nature was his master and inspirer. He found in the talents in which he outshone his fellow workmen, the impediment to a money elevation, for he made no gains adequate to his ability, although he doubled and sometimes tripled the gains of his fellow workmen ; but he could not work with his mind and hands at the same time. Such is the advantage common drudges in life have over the superior capacities, that really give themselves up for all, and receive little in return. I was astonished at the things I saw in the "Toy-shop of Europe," to which I used frequently to go by the Manchester and Birmingham railroad, to amuse myself by seeing the wonderful processes followed there. I saw that railroad opened—a scene I shall never forget. It was the first completed after the Liverpool and Manchester, in which last Mr. Huskisson was killed. The amazing display of population on this occasion beggared description, seeming the greater novelty of the whole—it was astounding.

The most intellectual and reflecting workmen, and at the same time the cleverest, or such men as those to whom I have just alluded, are not the men who render themselves conspicuous as political leaders, orators,

or the like. These are generally indifferent workmen, when not wholly of the idle, with little acquirements, many words, and bold fronts. The first-class men are solitary and retiring, rather than talkative and busy, feeling, though perhaps unconsciously, their own superiority. The self-conceited, half-educated idlers, are the foremost in tumultuous outpourings, and among them the Scotch are prominent, because they are constantly pondering how they shall make their market through other people. The mechanic of imagination, or rather of inventive power, in a certain way, follows the law of the more studious and thoughtful in learning and the arts, who rank highest in their departments. The minds of such have little in common with the stump orator and the chartist-leader. Even if their sentiments lead that way, and they do not feel their own superiority, they are so accustomed to find the difference between theory and practice in their mechanical labours, that they are aware of the hopelessness of realizing abstract truths. It is a pleasure to meet with this class of men, not the scholars of colleges or academies, but educated by nature, self-taught, rational, strong-minded, unobtrusive, of whom society would be prouder than it is, if society had but the true power of discrimination, and possessed sound judgment, or had perspicuity sufficient to perceive their inestimable worth in a country and generation like our own. The number of men of whom I speak is confined like all rare and inestimable things, and is not worldly in spirit. I would honour such men, however the unwise affect to look down upon them, for it is by them that nations like our own grow in greatness.

At Lichfield I had visited the sites connected with the history of Johnson. The house of his father, the bookseller, was inhabited by an ironmonger, and remains much as it was in his day. The stone placed over his father's remains, in St. Michael's church, is no longer to be seen, at least, I could not find it, nor get intelligence where it had gone. Chancellor Law munificently erected a statue of Johnson, just opposite the house of old Johnson, while I was in the country. The meadows below the east end of the cathedral, leading towards Stow Church, used to be my noon-day walk. No trace remains there of Johnson's willow. Miss Porter's house is still one of the best in the city, built of red brick. Miss Seward's residence in the Close is near the north-east angle of the cathedral, a roomy old habitation. I met with no one who had a personal recollection of Johnson, although there were several ancient people alive there; but then half a century had elapsed since he died in London, and his later visits to the city were not frequent. I met with some who were acquainted with Darwin. Dr. Harwood, the venerable historian of Lichfield, I knew well. In that city, too, I conversed for the first time with a centenarian, by trade a mason; he was sitting by his fire, and complained only of deafness. He was fresh-coloured and healthy in appearance. I thought him likely to live some years longer; yet life to him seemed not of much moment. It is usually supposed that the love of life increases with years.

I returned to London. The proprietary, to lessen their current expences, proposed getting a reporter to look after the paper, at a low rate of income, and it

was now in a state to make its way ; it had become plain sailing. My knowledge of politics, the county, and people, thus become superfluous in that trading sense, which regards the ledger alone. The paper, too, could not longer be considered as embracing the county at large.

Prior to leaving off my task, I had many gratifying expressions of regret at my departure. I was flattered on being unexpectedly addressed by a member of the lower House.

“ You said the other day you were going to leave us. You have been working between thirty and forty years exactly on the same political side—few can say as much. Let me know in what we can be useful to you.”

This was the first time in my life that anything similar had been said to me. On the other hand, nothing like solicitation for anything of the kind had entered into my head. It was ever my fault to leave the future to take care of itself. An unusual flow of health and good spirits, and perhaps no little love of independence, caused in me too great a forgetfulness of that object which absorbs the souls of the mass of mankind. I thought it disgraceful to turn. From the day I set out in life, I had been steady, through evil and good report, to one point. I had seen the triumph of the principles with which I started. When not employed in my duties of reading and writing, exercise, and sometimes experimental essays in different sciences, constituted my amusement. I had none of what the world deems lofty aspirations ; in other words, of the art of huckstering and money-making. Studying the old philosophers early in life, had made me regard the art

of cozening others for self-advantage as meanness. I considered the notions of the masses in worldliness as unworthy those who think and reason, never carrying their ideas above self-interest in anything, and moved alone by the desire to possess that which, in a few years, they must abandon. I did not square my ideas with the many upon some other subjects. I thought that what they deemed the end of existence, should only be the means.

It was not wonderful, therefore, that I was ignorant of any post in which I could be serviceable, while I was a perfect stranger to all intrigues for selfish purposes, and often when mingling in society, among men of title, fortune, or influence, my last idea had been how to turn them to a selfish account, being proud to maintain a species of social freedom, and even fearful lest my motives should be misconstrued. In pecuniary matters, I was ever economical. If I found my necessary expenses were met, I troubled my head no farther, throwing myself ardently into the business before me, which sometimes happened to be more attractive by being controversial, and from being frequently the leader in the contest on behalf of my own party. I now reflected seriously on the generous offer, and that my position was precarious after all. I had been seven years out of London, severing business connections there. At the same time, I had written one successful commercial work in my "History of Wine." I had lived abroad in different places, for three years on a stretch, and to me, after my old friend Demaria's simile, "a bale of goods from a cobbler's green bag," I did know, though I was never engaged in

trade of any kind. Why not then ask for a consulship? Such posts were given even to military officers, who knew nothing beyond regimental duty, and no language but the vernacular; in fact to those who could make interest for them. Two peers, and five members of the House of Commons, in consequence, applied for such an appointment in my behalf. Lord Palmerston at once placed me upon his list. I had an interview with his lordship at the Foreign Office, in which, with great openness and candour, he explained that such appointments were limited, that vacancies where I should like to go rarely fell in, and were much contested, but that he would not fail to remember an application so strongly supported.

I called occasionally at the Foreign Office, nothing presenting itself for several months, when Lord Melbourne's administration went out. If there was a post of the kind, for which I was a candidate, vacant at the moment, it was filled up by some name on the list with superior interest. Length of toil, honest service, necessity, go for nothing in place of being justly balanced in considering such claims. After all, I fear, not being a Scotchman, I was not sufficiently a plague to the Foreign Office by persevering solicitude. Under Sir Robert Peel, whose anti-free-trade efforts I had combated at his own door, I had no hope of any kind. I had, therefore, to return to my usual avocations, and falling back upon my labours, seek amusement in waking dreams, and substantial support in vain hopes.

The death of a friend, soon afterwards, cut once more into the circle of my acquaintance. Dr. Lord, of the Bom-

bay army, was killed in action with Dost Mahommed at Purwan. He was an excellent creature, in the prime and vigour of a promising existence, acting as political agent at Cabul. Just before quitting his country for ever, I had visited him, convalescent from the measles, a singular instance of the disease in one between thirty and forty years of age. Lord was an excellent scholar, and had been very diligent in the study of the Oriental tongues. He had a notion he could study anywhere, but he was often put out of the way in the attempt.

The best situation for a student, in the summer, to my liking, is some way in the suburbs, and not in London, the window facing the north, and open to the green fields. If it command an extensive landscape so much the better. The eyes may expatiate while the thoughts are far from the scene before them. The position must be noiseless. If the barking of the dog, the crowing of the cock, (which in London, all its good people know, have no discrimination as to day or night, noon or noontide,) if the low of kine be audible, it must be at such a distance as not to startle or visit the porches of the ear too roughly. The miserable kettle they call a bell in the later-built churches, and it is no better, must not be near to make a horrible ringing in the ears, very far from being like that which heard—

Over some wide watered shore
Swinging slow with sullen roar.

is so charming an accompaniment in rural sounds. Sudden noises are sad interruptions. Hence the back attic of the old authors, often attributed in jest, and

and earnest, to their poverty. I have had recourse to one myself, in houses where I have resided in town. Out of the inns of court, there is little peace, except at the top of the house. Even there, barrel organs, yelling brats, costermongers with cries not less musical than the howl of the savage, grinding carriage wheels, screaming fruit sellers, and vagabonds with blackened faces, semi-musical, playing childish antics, outdo, in the modern Babylon, all that the ancient could have produced to torment the student. With a thermometer ranging above 80° , the casement must be opened for all sort of noises, blacks, and blue-bottle flies. It is not easy to say how many worthy thoughts have become disconnected, and portions of them slipped away through "cracks and zigzags of the head," which might have been worth preservation, but for such vile interruptions. Some boast they can compose under any circumstances, and truly, there can be no works possessing more the tendency to "compose" others, than such as are put together where honest reflection is absent, and words stand for sense. Socrates might have studied amid the thunder of Xantippe, but he would hardly have selected for that purpose the part of his domicile where the lady resided. Newton naturally took a different view upon the point, as his study on the roof of his house in St. Martyn's Street, shows at this day, a building I never see without deep respect for that illustrious philosopher.

CHAPTER VII.

I HAD scarcely arrived in town before I was invited to assist Mr. Fonblanque in the "Examiner." His articles had long attracted great attention. He was, without exception, the neatest political writer of the day. There was always condensation, sound sense, and humour, with the love of the truthful, in his articles. It has been contended that he could not keep up a sustained flight, in other words, dilate on a given subject in the approved mode of the modern school. This is probable. A style so good and deservedly popular could gain nothing by being drawn into wire. The remark was probably made by critics who were expected not to be silent, and had nothing else to say. Few merited more the rare commendation of having known how far to go in order to attract, and then to impress himself upon the memory with effect. A tried writer of liberal principles, and high qualifications, thinking and acting as a gentleman, is a praise that cannot be denied him by any, much less by myself, ready as I am at all times to confess obligations, and never to evade them as

many men, particularly fashionable men, are sure to do, however deep in debt.

The death of Lord Holland happened about this time. I had but one communication from him after 1829, dated from Ampthill. I first saw him at Falmouth, when I was a boy, as he was about to embark for Spain. I then regarded him because he was the nephew of Fox, at that time so noted a name. His appearance made me fancy a resemblance between him and Fox, in the caricatures of the day, for I had then no personal knowledge of him beyond that. I have mentioned my communication with his lordship nine years after this, in relation to my letters on the Libel law. A gentleman in manner, an excellent hearted man, remarkable for an absence of all worldliness. He had more moral courage than any other peer. He never skulked behind paltry reservations, basing his arguments upon policy in place of justice. I am sorry so little judgment was shown in editing his papers. Where would many excellent men be if private thoughts and memoranda, created at idle moments, and not reconsidered, were given crudely to the world ! Of how many natives and foreigners, now no more, was Holland House not the rendezvous ! Of foreigners in my own little circle were Foscolo, Blanco White, Telesforo Trueba, Arguelles, and Cayetano Valdez. Lord Holland used to tell a story with some humour of his father, or grandfather—I forget which. His relative had brought a bill into the House, which was sadly mutilated with red ink in the way of alteration and amendment. One of the opposing peers called it “the noble Lord’s bill.” His lordship rose, asserted that, so mutilated, the bill was not his. Then, pointing

at the scarlet mutilations, he exclaimed, turning also to the peers who had made them :—

Look, in this place ran Cassius' dagger through—
See what a rent the envious Casca made!
Through this the well-beloved Brutus stabbed!

The effect was so droll as to convulse the House with laughter. I feel deep respect for the memory of the first commender of my youthful efforts, and encourager of hopes too delusive. Who that knew his lordship can forget his amenity—his humour—his considerateness—his converse—his friendliness—and adherence to principle! None who knew Holland House can fail to recall how men of all creeds and opinions met in peace there. It always puzzled me how such opposite natures as those of Lord and Lady Holland united. There were few who felt attached to Lady Holland. Foscolo's energetic speech about that lady I have recorded. Polite, cold, haughty, to those she met in social intercourse; she was offensive towards those to whom she took a dislike. She would construe into a personal affront any remark of the slightest nature which did not chime in with her views. Campbell fell into disgrace with her, because he ventured to dispute about the pronunciation of a word, or rather, against her use of it. It happened during the six or seven years I was absent from town. After I returned, I went rarely into company, so that I heard comparatively little of the chit-chat of the day. I remember asking Campbell whether he had been recently at Holland House; he replied in the negative, that "he did not care about dressing to go so far." I thought that likely enough, from the state in which I

found him in his latter years ; but that was not all. I heard the anecdote, which might have been an additional reason, from another quarter. Lady Holland talked about having ‘taken a drive.’ Campbell questioned her about the phraseology, ‘taking a drive ;’ and, though but in jest, she took it in earnest, and treated the poet with an *hauteur*, to which he would not expose himself. On another occasion, she desired a servant at the dinner-table to fetch one of her pocket-handkerchiefs, and bade him take Mr. ———’s, and give him hers, for she could not bear the smell of lavender so near her. One of Rogers’s criticisms, not long before her death, just after her son had written the injudicious letter in his mother’s defence, was severe enough. It rests on the authority of a very distinguished man, who called upon Rogers one morning, and Rogers, who had a great regard for Lord Holland, had as much for Lady Holland as most other people, and said her ladyship could not but feel awkward at the ill-timed epistle, though filial affection both dictated and excused it.

“What does Lady Holland think of it?”

“Think, my dear Sir?” said Rogers, “why, that she could just then as soon have buried the colonel as the kid.”

A gentleman whom I knew, Mr. Pryce Gordon, remembered her ladyship when a girl of sixteen. Her father was a character, and then resided at Bristol. He was principally noted for the tricks he used to play off upon his neighbours.

How the death-list of remarkable persons increases as our days career onwards!—how very fast men seem to pass away! Are we no better than an odour, to be

exhaled and perish? Yet why am I sensitive on the subject?—why have I the consciousness of my inevitable doom, if that consciousness be idle? Why was I designed as I am? and why was not the matter of which I consist formed into an animal, or a plant?—why was I endowed with ideas, and filled with hopes, hopeless of fruition?—why do I live dissatisfied, while the meanest and most insignificant creatures, of cribbed and circumscribed action, pass their lives in content, without the “thought of ills to come,” to mingle their ashes indiscriminately with mine in the earth? What a mystery is all this, where even the little good we achieve individually often turns to the detriment of the performer, and memory so continually changes the past to pain! Our histories are those of a series of catastrophes, or little better, until the staff of the skeleton magician, like that of Aaron, swallows up our staffs, and ourselves with them. Our pride gives us higher destinies than we merit, which proves nothing. The most sacred rules in morals and creeds do not change our career of conceit, presumption, and inanity. The lower mass still glories in superstition, or grovels in ignorance—the higher, in self-conceit and frivolity. Wisdom cries vainly in our streets, and the end of man’s existence daily becomes a greater puzzle. The voice of the preacher is unheard; the laws of reason and conscience conduct us not more rapidly to virtue than of old; so that, if virtue be to lead us to a better state, its indignant treatment by the world is one of the best excuses for the world’s vices. Let us pray that the terms have not been reversed, and that we do not, through mistake, use the one for the other. Such are

the bosom questionings put when the soul expatiates beyond the diurnal routine of thought.

To the calamity of ignorance we must look for most of the evils which afflict us, but the larger part of mankind must ever be in comparative darkness, the capacity for the acquirement of knowledge being wanting to them. The difference of social and bodily condition is reflected in the human mind. It is no more possible to make a great number of persons comprehend and act uniformly upon plans conducive to their own welfare, than it is to teach them to comprehend Euclid. A proportion, greater than we dream, cannot be taught more than is sufficient to regulate, in some degree, the labour by which they contrive to exist. I have tried again and again to instruct a countryman in a few plain truths for his own advantage, but in vain. A momentary impression was made and no more. He relapsed into his old habits, he returned to his custom as the dog returns to his vomit, and exhibited himself little superior to that animal in sagacity. Tens of thousands must be ignorant because by their obtuseness nature intended they should be—instruction being vain in their behalf. The notion of an equality of the mental calibre is as utopian as an equality of conditions. It never did nor can exist, and therefore the happiness of the individual in life is not made dependent upon his ability for acquiring knowledge. At the present moment the practice of a few common place precautions, the spirit of adventure for gain, and a wider scope of action for the inventions of a few gifted and studious persons, are considered the fruits of the general intellect, in place of the results of traffic wholly unconscious of the benefit

it accidentally confers. Men aspire without power to rise from being too feeble to regulate their evil passions, and then seek for artificial means to do that which destroys self-restraining virtue. This, too, regardless of the higher claims they have to freedom of action, who are able to command themselves. The desire to exercise, or influence the government of the state is exhibited in this way, where the least capacity for the duty and the more fallible judgment co-exist. I am much mistaken if ignorance more than at present pervaded high places we should not find the greater incompetence a source of infinite misery. It is not hard to govern a people, for the rulers are seldom of the wisest, but it is far more easy to lay a weight upon the rulers as they are, and keep them within certain beneficial limits, than it is to turn them out, and taking the helm, quarrel over it, while the vessel is left to the gale. Men lose improvement under the idea of realizing perfection.

It is pleasant at fitting seasons, even under disappointment, to converse with oneself unreservedly, and to be honest in self-accusation. We thus administer correction to our errors. We find, too, a source of great enjoyment in the supposition of better things attaching to a more advanced state of social existence than a dull reality proffers us, changing our existing domicile for that of fairy land. It may be similar to the change between sanity and madness that distinguishes the dream-weaver from the plodding man of every day life. The difference may only consist of a thin partition at best, but it is an essential difference for all that. Why may we not now and then become unconscious of the reality of what is about us, to enjoy something better,

which, though it be evanescent, displays 'colours dipped in heaven,' and causes only regret when we awake out of our dream, that it was not prolonged. The Frenchman who died at seventy "without ever having lived," must have been destitute of the faculty of castle-building. His nurse's milk was sour, he could not learn his alphabet, and was kept on bread and water; he was sent to be an attorney's clerk, and then to sea, where he got two dozen lashes a day. He married a woman with some property, and afterwards discovered she had a wooden leg; her property was consumed by a fire, and she died after he had spent six years in repenting his marriage. Laying aside one third of his life spent in sleep, a year or two in searching for things carelessly lost at different times; a year or two of tooth-aches and colds; a couple of years in asking, "What is it a clock?" "How d'ye do?" "Cold weather." "How hot it is." "How dirty the streets are." "How is your good lady?" "What a sad cough I have got." A year in using the brush over his hat, and another in taking snuff. One or two in the theatres and at sermons, and another in finding fault with dinners, bad soups, hard boiled eggs, and so on, he had reached seventy without ever having "lived," and he was, therefore, ready to give up the life not worth keeping. This unlucky Frenchman, it is clear, could not build *châteaux en Espagne*, as I used to do when a youth, under the infliction of an oration filled with dull repetitions, or the tenth lecture in the week on a truism, self-evident to a spaniel dog, while at the same time I was supposed to be all attention to what was poured into my ears. This is nursing a young

hypocrisy. I remember soon after I came to London, that in an opulent Quaker family which I knew, the young ladies in dove coloured bonnets, would have the carriage drive to a supposed tea-drinking party. No male was suffered to enter the vehicle—he must mount the box.

“Where are you going?”

“It is a secret, but we can trust thee—make the coachman drive to Covent Garden. We are going to change our outer dresses in the carriage on the way—help us up with the blinds.”

Such is the mode in which life begins its hypocrisies, when things of the heart, in which the heart has no share, are forced into external observance. In this way, it is that incipient hypocrisies are nurtured into those full grown, and society becomes inoculated with the vice. The joy of hypocrisy may be only momentary, as Job tells us, but the character is one of social expansion, and never-ending endurance.

A contest was expected to take place for the city of Lichfield—parliament being dissolved. I was invited to go down and aid in supporting my old friends. There was a stern determination to turn out Lord Alfred Paget. The Tory opposition well knew that General Sir George Anson could not be shaken, and, curious enough, it had no objection to vote for a Whig and a Tory member, in order to secure a few votes in return, a precious display of principle, common in the Bull family. I was informed it was to be “war to the knife.” I refused an important professional engagement offered me, unluckily, at that exact moment, and started from town with Lord A. Paget.

The opposing candidate was Captain Dyott, the son of General Dyott, whose ancestor I have already mentioned as a lucky marksman. The general might, while sticking to his colours as a Tory, have rendered his opposition courteous, which he did not. We reached the city, and began the canvass on the same day. This might seem a light affair, had not the city and county of Lichfield extended in a radius of seven miles from the Guildhall, and, as it was found afterwards, included Drayton Manor, Sir Robert Peel's estate, Sir Robert not having yet become a free-trader. The ground was subsequently measured, and the baronet's right established.

With opportunities in my youth of observing the old system of borough management at scenes, mis-named elections, when many members were returned by a *pro forma* farce, it would be untrue to state that this constitutional act is not now greatly improved. Yet no one can watch the proceedings in some places at present, a little behind the curtain, and not confess that theory and practice at elections are still too often greatly at variance. The fault is in the people, and their determination in practice to consider their private interests before their public duty. They call for reform: why do they not reform themselves? Is it not from the same mental delinquency that makes them demand laws restraining the worthier classes in society from certain indulgences, that of fermented liquors, for example, because they cannot themselves refrain from the most grovelling vices, owing to their incapacity for obeying the manly resolution which belongs to rational beings. They must be drunkards and gluttons, unless restrained

by force. They know nothing of reason, of morality, or of religion, in the matter. Yet these same frail-minded persons call out for political reform, and talk of their rights, and would fain persuade their countrymen, that, though unable to resist sensual indulgences of the grossest kind, they are able to combat the temptation of the electoral bribe; and that, though liquor is their master, they are proof against the means of purchasing it by the gallon only for want of money!

I have seen much of elections, yet as an actor I have had little to do with them. Too great a number have a twist the wrong way, and the details are often nauseous; in the more corrupt instances, detestable. The canvass is a feast of double dealing, full of revulsion to every high mind. The celebrated Alderman Beckford, so great a favourite in the metropolis, would never canvas at all. He contended that it was an indirect attempt to bias electors, exceedingly unbecoming. Even before the Reform Act, election contests had become less headstrong than before.

A town of eight thousand inhabitants, the representation of which was vested in twenty-one persons, "who were in the interest" of two peers, I resided in for some years. One of these, wishing to return both members, the number of votes being divided equally, called the casting vote aside, saying he had ten thousand pounds in his pocket, and the whole sum should be that voter's in exchange for his vote. "No, my lord," he replied, "the whole earth for a bribe should not make me break my word. I have given it to Lord F——." This voter was a man of a small income. The peer in whose interest he voted did not forget

his conduct, but in return, pushed up his children in the public service, one of whom still survives. I fear such disinterested examples would be rarer now.

To return to Lichfield. The Close and its wide ecclesiastical æsophagus, recalling that of Gargantua, when eating for its own interests, swallowed Whig and Tory according to its prospective objects. It was still as craving, but over an empty dish. The absence of corruption was now remarkable. It had once been strikingly displayed, to the injury of the real electors. A patron of some mark was wanting, the great supporter of the new opposition being only a local attorney.

The Close people registered their votes with due dignity, but here their power was stayed for the first time, and they were represented by the individual above-mentioned. The weather was warm, and the bustle considerable. On the Saturday night, well-fagged, we sought the lofty shades of Beaudesert. Dust, heat, speechifying, complimenting, exhausts the spirits even under party excitement, not to speak of tobacco fumes and beer ever under the nose. The contest was kept up with vigour to the last, and the result, a majority of nine or ten, only showed the exertions which had been made on both sides. The state of the poll at the close was announced just in time to save the post. The successful candidate, hemmed in on all sides, begged me to announce his success to his father, a task I achieved with difficulty within post time. The Marquis wrote by return, stating that, "Independently of his feelings for his son, he rejoiced most sincerely in the event on public grounds." This was, indeed, a much greater triumph than that at a common election. It

broke down a monopoly of popular right by ecclesiastical wrong, that had lasted for ages.

Death has since deprived his country of this distinguished nobleman, full of years and honours, one of those who in a great nation, stands among the foremost for many of those high qualities which belonged to the best of the old school, rather than the new, of the herioc era rather than that of traffic, better estimated in lofty historical records than in the staple of common panegyric; in other words, more calculated for the admiration of the discriminating few, than the applause of those who judge by the vulgar standard of every day opinion. The Marquis of Anglesey was singularly disinterested, high-minded, candid, chivalrous, without a particle of guile, in honour sensitive, in kindness foremost, in dealing gentlemanly, plain, and somewhat blunt of address, affable, never suffering his social superiority to be felt, he was the last with whom an ill-bred person could take a liberty, or a well-bred one feel constraint. His manners were natural, and not the offspring of study or affectation; his carriage elegant, but perfectly simple. He was one of nature's gentlemen, and from always thinking in accordance with the character, it governed his personal bearing. A mean action on his part was an impossibility. With high spirit, his sterling courage tempting him, in some instances, to hazard his squadrons farther than was politic, leading them personally, with a daring impetuosity that looked more to the impulse of overflowing valour than to the rules of military conduct, as at Sahagan, where, with four hundred men, he defeated eight hundred, sword in

hand, and at Mayoga, Benevente, Corunna and Waterloo. To have shown more of the strategist, he would have exhibited less of his bold and generous character as a soldier ; in all, exhibiting the more distinguished qualities with which he had been gifted by nature. All around him prevailed the spirit of order, his establishments exactly arranged, and everything in its place. No stranger saw him, but was struck with the grace of his manners, and the manly elegance of his bearing. He showed the old hardihood in his living. He never indulged in luxurious appliances, for which he might well have been excused, particularly after the loss of his leg. He suffered, at one time, severe attacks of the *tic-doloureux*, which he sustained with extraordinary firmness. He was an early riser. I remember calling at Uxbridge House one day about half-past ten, and the Marquis said he had breakfasted nearly three hours before.

There was a singular contrast remarked, in regard to the two lord-lieutenants, Anglesey and Wellesley, who followed one another in filling that post in Ireland :— Lord Anglesey unaffected, simple, manly, with his tall graceful figure, asking no extrinsic aid from pomp and circumstance, and full of self-reliance. Lord Wellesley, insignificant in figure, scrupulous in the display of snow-white linen, and dangling jewellery, a singular mixture of talent and frivolity, fond of show, and destitute of that manly simplicity which was a distinguishing trait in the character of his brother, the Duke of Wellington.

The Marquis of Anglesey was a great favourite in Ireland with all, except the Orangemen. Both these

distinguished viceroys now live only in memory. A new race has taken their places, in a parallel with which they cannot suffer. If the bygone had failings, they had great qualities to balance them. They were, at least, lofty of mind, contrasted with the meanness and trickery now rife in all ranks and degrees of officials. Lord Anglesey exhibited in death the same intrepidity he had displayed in life. His family stood round his bed at the moment of his dissolution. He was perfectly calm and collected. Addressing one of his sons, "Good-bye, my boy," he expired without a sigh. It was a true Euthanasia. But to continue.

I returned to town with the newly elected members, the veteran cavalry commander, Sir George Anson, now no more, having resumed his seat ; a most amiable, soldier, a disposition remarkable in the whole Anson family. When we reached Tamworth, we found Sir Robert Peel addressing the people. His audience was not numerous. I have already remarked the want of power in Sir Robert, of adapting his style of oratory to his hearers. His address then was far above the grasp of the class of persons composing the larger part of his audience.

A petition, frivolous and even ridiculous, was presented against Lord Alfred Paget's return, and came to nothing. A local history of the above proceedings was afterwards published, in which the writer thought fit to compliment me, in terms which to repeat would be egotistical, considering how little in behalf of his object, although he thought so much of it, I was able to contribute.

In the meanwhile, I matured for others a scheme

for growing silk in the south of Europe, gathered from what I had noticed at the time I collected statistics for my "History of Wine," many years before. I communicated my ideas to Mr. Morrison, whose want of time, from the pressure of his business, prevented his full consideration of the scheme.

Hitherto I had been ruled in all I had done by a stern desire of independent action. I had set out in life with supporting liberal principles. I had laboured a hundred times, and toiled hard for years, in order to uphold the principles of the Fox party. What little cost I might have incurred, I bore myself. I was never paid my expences but once, at the last election of which I have spoken, and then only for loss of time, because I never demanded them. I imagined that if not too great a self-sacrifice, every freeman ought to avoid, above all things, suffering money considerations to interfere with public duties. This was romantic, perhaps, in one who lived by his labours, but it is not the less a fact. Wherever money becomes the stimulant to exertion in pursuits above those which are mercantile, such pursuits lose their true spirit, from marks of failure in the motive.

I do not deny that a slight anxiety did sometimes arise about the future, in case of a protracted existence, with physical or mental disability to labour. But it passed like a cloud across hope's deceptive vision. Others pressed the consideration upon me much oftener than I myself recurred to it.

A publication was started of a cheap character, and I undertook the editorship. Horace Smith, Miss Mitford, Mrs. Watts, Douglas Jerrold, Mr. St. John,

and other well-known writers, aided me by their contributions. The work proceeded with good success until a dispute of the proprietary, within itself, caused the relinquishment of the publication. The editor, as usual, became the creature of circumstances, over which he had no control.

A biographical dictionary was proposed to me just then, to be of an extensive character. Murray, the publisher, was one of the prime movers of the project, and was to hold a large share, but he got into a dispute with some of the other parties concerned, and the affair fell to the ground.

I then went into the West of England to collect materials for a descriptive account of our more picturesque counties. My design was to confine the descriptions to the peculiar scenery of each district, and to keep to the statistics in those things which were of general interest, and matters of reference only. I was limited in regard to space. I completed my task, and returned to town, when I had the mortification of finding, during my absence, that an individual of whom I knew but little, and esteemed less, had gone in my absence, and persuaded the publishers that they should proceed faster, and that the county of Lancaster would be more certain to answer. Setting off with an account of the manufactories which he could write, it would, he hinted to the proprietors, make a sensation, the reverse was likely and proved to be the fact. The people of Lancashire did not want to be told how to make cotton. I had neglected to bind the bookseller, by agreement, before I set out. I edited the volume, and gave the description of Furness. Dr. Beard, of Manchester, wrote

an account of the antiquities and seats, halls, and similar subjects in the midland part of the county. The design, I originally planned, was thus rendered abortive. The Cornwall sells now at two-thirds of the price at which it was published, although the number printed was considerable. The complaint against it in the county was, that it was only half as much in extent of matter as it should have been, but in this I was limited.

The visit I had paid to a district so long afterwards, in which the early part of existence had been passed, naturally produced many melancholy associations. Nature was the same; man only had changed; the friends of early life were no more to be seen—they had passed away. The tavern signs no longer bore the names of yore; and the retail shops had strange ones affixed to them. New streets had sprung up, and cast the older ones into the shade as to extent, neatness, and even elegance of construction.

I everywhere saw improvement in unorganized things. I had left youth and beauty, too, behind me, when I quitted, and now I found among the few whom the King of Terrors had spared, spectacle-seeing women no longer captivating, but ordinary of person. The charms that had answered the end of attracting to perpetuate the race, that end being met, a purposeless age had removed. Where were now the fresh and glowing pictures of youth—those anticipations of gaudy hope and the early incredulity that—well for themselves—saw in the truths of more advanced years only sour saws and officious crabbedness? In vain I went from one well-remembered

spot to another, the dumb image had its old aspect only from a familiarity with objects of greater extent, looking somewhat as a landscape looks through an instrument, optically diminishing the details. It was in the stillness of a summer evening—the sky nearly covered with light clouds—the west tinged with red and gold, casting long shadows over the fields—that I took my way towards a church-yard, deeply engraved in memory. Along the lane which led to it, trees met, over-arching the umbered shadows beneath. It was like a cathedral aisle. Not a leaf stirred, and the vesper song of the birds alone broke a silence, on which the foot echo of no passenger, but myself, intruded. There, in the last century, a boy, on a Saturday half-holiday, I was rambling without a companion, a man overtook me and told me that a sister had just expired. I was thunder-stricken, and turned towards home. Death had never before entered our dwelling. Could it be? I asked myself again and again, as I pressed homewards, “and what is death?” I remember it all as if it occurred but yesterday. I was now going to where her dust had by this time mingled indistinguishably with its parent earth. Hard by, too, lay he who had given me being. It was a pilgrimage to no shrine for cozening human credulity. Here were the ashes of those whom I had seen and loved—a spot embalmed by memory—one of those selfish remembrances which the interested and solitary heart can alone appreciate. I walked in a reverie, during one of those moods which come upon us at such times, until I reached the church-yard. There stood the tower, indeed, but the body of the church had disappeared, re-

placed by one of a different aspect. As if to greet me, a bird poured forth its mournful song as I entered the church-yard. What bird it was, I know not ; but its notes brought back old times upon my heart. Numerous additional records of death, since I was last here, accounted for the loss of the old names on the signs, and old faces in the streets, where I had that day walked as an utter stranger. At the tomb of my relatives, I had heavy thoughts. I lingered, loth to leave, until the moon rose, while the glow of the warm sun was still faintly lingering in the west. It was a silent, tranquil moment, melancholy indeed, and touching to the spirit. By some hidden influence, the mind seemed to connect itself with sensations of a novel character, by the banishment of all that was of the existing earth. "As that late summer was passing away, so," thought I, "pass the generations of my kind. Soon adieu to sunshine, bright hopes, and rich prospects, too, with me. I shall soon see no more the rich green of the leaf, the glory of the declining sun, the beautiful hues of earth's countless flowers, and the ears of golden corn that are waving in the precious ocean of nature's beneficence around me." As I moved away from the church-yard, saddened with retrospections, which will come in spite of ourselves, and casting a last glance at the numerous memorials, upon which the yellow moon looked down as it had looked for ages before, when bright eyes, closed in death, and entombed there, had seen it shine as sweetly as I now beheld it, while walking up its path in heaven—that reflection and corresponding scene made me conscious of immortality. There must be something beyond the

natural vanity of mankind, something imprinted inexplicably in the heart, that, when for the moment we thus repress mean feelings, spontaneously whispers the verity of this delightful anticipation.

Nearly forty years had elapsed since I left in the bloom of youthful attraction a young lady, whose image I carried afar, pictured inerasably in my mind. Of a figure rather under the middle size of her sex in general, not foremost in beauty, but well-looking, and with that witchery of expression which speaks so eloquently, and so irresistibly, to the heart of the other sex. We had parted to meet no more. She died in the springtide of life, not many months after I had taken leave of her. I felt an irresistible desire to visit her tomb. I had never been in the church-yard where she lay ; but I saw the spire about six miles distant. I rose in the sunlight of a lovely day ; the waves of the restless ocean broke gently on the sandy shore of one of the most beautiful bays in the island. I met no one, for it was the morning hour of five. Numberless recollections of the past came uppermost in my mind. Perhaps the years that had perished since I met her whose dust now mingled with its parent earth, did in some degree deepen the hues imagination presented of departed things, in place of rendering them, as in general, more faint. Vivid were those glimpses, touched with melancholy, it is true, but priceless in estimation. The murmuring surf seemed to speak mysteriously of the inexorable character of time, and of destiny. The blue heaven reflected in that calm sea, looked not smoother than I had dreamed my future path would be through life,

with one whom I imagined in the heyday of youth, might share in the pleasant journey—but, enough. I reached the spot, where over her dust the storms of thirty-five winters had careered unheard, and as many smiling summers bloomed in the peculiar loveliness of that beautiful locality. I could find no memorial with her name. I read every stone, from that of infancy to old age—from the storm-worn letters of the oldest record, to the fresh-cut memorial of the latest erected, but in vain. The wife of the sexton, as I found afterwards, stood at her cottage door. As she appeared in advanced life, I thought she must remember the family the name of which I sought. She did so at once, pointing to a tomb, surrounded by iron palisades.

“She lies there, Sir, but has no stone; that tomb is to the memory of a sister’s daughter, not born at the period to which you allude. She, too, died quite young; a sweet girl she was.”

I thanked my informant, and lingered away an hour on the spot. The revival of a hundred things, insignificant enough in themselves, followed, that no act of volition could have recalled, proving that there is a storehouse, where, though not obedient to our call, the precious things of memory are retained to turn the past to pain. My feeling I cannot describe; I tardily turned my back on a spot with so many melancholy associations; and, after a walk of a couple of miles to the breaking waves, I sat down on a rock, the surf nearly bathing my feet, and again recalling the pleasure that I had received from the society of the dead, I felt a kind of indignation that her grave should be nameless.

This induced an expression of my feelings in verse, begun as I walked back to the hotel.*

* I cannot omit this oblation written on visiting a nameless grave

What! not a stone to tell the name
Of her who sleeps forgotten here?
Bounded indeed, sweet maid, the fame,
Whose only record is a tear!
Thou early badst life's feast farewell,
Its guests unworthy love and thee;
Thou didst but earlier go to swell
The hosts of immortality!
Though of a stone and name bereft,
What boots it for an inch of time,
Memorials frail, too often left
To darken good, and brighten crime?

Aye, time has fled indeed since thou
Wert my own spirit's counterpart,
That faithful to its earlier vow
Cannot of severence allow—
Thou phantom treasure of my heart!
A pilgrim to thy dust below
I come when life thus far is spent—
So far Judea's pilgrims go
To mourn where fane and monument
Time's ruthless hand has stricken low,
Yet hallowed in their hearts the spot
By all beside on earth forgot—
The feeling words may not declare,
Macpelah's sacred earth is there!

Tempest and current far have driven
My bark wild on the waves of time,
Since thou didst earth forsake for heaven,
And I was in my being's prime.
Memory still paints thy movements free,
Thy form in beauty's symmetry,
As at the hour which saw us part

I proceeded as far as the Land's End, intending to embark for Scilly, but a stubborn west wind blew home.

Thou violet of the South's sweet shade,
As earthly amaranths born to fade.

Fancy beholds thy deathless grace,
Lit by a brighter sun than ours,
In scenes of everlasting peace,

Where happiness leads on the hours—
While I scarce know if best for me,
The joy or grief of memory !

I grieve while thou canst grieve no more,

I came, I go, my visit done,
Where the tall spire beyond the shore
Tells to the mariner his course is run,
But does not him, like me apprise,
It shades at the meridian hour
The spot where now a withered flower,
Gathered in beauty Emma lies—

Where memory paints that flower's rich hue
Too long, long faded to the sense
While it exhales the odour true—

That never dying influence,
And dew from off the fresh turf's bloom
That glistens o'er decay and tomb !
Now none on earth, fair girl, save me,
Think of the hour God gave to thee !

Thou as yon rock above the main,

Rising with castellated brow,*
Wert steadfast from religion's gain,
Tempering the hue of things below.

God's chosen ones die young, they say,
And there is good by sorrow brought,
And though long years have pass'd away,
I must not, dare not, raise the thought
If thou still shared'st humanity,

It perhaps had better been for me ;
Though I might then have loved thee less ;
For what is love but selfishness !

* Mount St. Michael's ; Milton's " Guarded Mount."

I returned, visiting places I had never before examined, and at last wishing to enter the church-yard of the parish where I was born, St. Gluvias, I repaired there, but was refused access. I remonstrated; my determined manner with the servant, drew out the master, Archdeacon Sheepshanks. It appeared he had excluded the public in consequence of dilapidations being committed by trespassers. We had some rough words at first; I told him I had seen much of England, but never before met with such an incident. We both cooled down, and presently the archdeacon proposed to walk over his tabooed domain. We did so, became friends for the moment, and, on leaving the place, a sweet retirement, he requested me to rest in the garden-seat, placed himself along side me, and entering into conversation. He brought up the name of Parr, and let me know he was a Cambridge man. I soon found he did not esteem the great Grecian as I thought he would do, speaking

Alas! it was a short-lived gleam
That lit our steps from thee,
And made earth bright and lovely seem—
A sun-burst on the sea;
A longer shine had charmed us less,
If we could tire of happiness.
Jewels too long admired give light
Less brilliant on repeated sight,
And thus thy image seems more dear,
Mellowed by each revolving year.

Farewell! no never, never here,
My footsteps will again appear—
But still remembrance hoard with care
The dust so precious and so rare—
Unmark'd amid this lonely spot,
By all, save by myself, forgot!

slightingly of him. There seems to me great narrowness of mind in some of our clergy, whom Latin and Greek are supposed to qualify for the duties of Christian ministers. The misfortune is, that many know little besides, whereas a clergyman stands in need of much general knowledge, to fulfil the duties of his station with good effect, and those who know something of the world are certain to be the most effective. I was told that the archdeacon was a kind and charitable man. He died a few years subsequent to my visit.

I returned to town to complete my task, when I found it necessary to repair to Lancaster, and crossed the sands, into the romantic district of Furness. I visited the Abbey, then one of the most remarkable of our monastic ruins, since desecrated by a railway, which destroys the solitary character of one of the most interesting places in the kingdom. It was then well worth a journey from London to see, not being a show place like Fountains Abbey. In the church-yard of Dalton, I found the tomb of Romney, the painter, a native of that place, an early patron of Lady Hamilton.

About this time, died Lady Cork. I had met her at dinner a few days before her decease, nearly a century old. She appeared in perfect health, and her usual spirits, well able to ascend the drawing-room stairs, leaning on the arm of another of her sex. She was of the lesser stature of women, and in Johnson's day, as Miss Monson, might have been handsome and vivacious; at such an advanced age, little judgment can be formed of the bearing or disposition of an individual in early life. Lady Cork had acquired a certain celebrity, from meeting literary men in her youth, who complimented

her, while she, in return, made it her practice to attach that kind of society to her circle of visitors in after life, when other individuals, in similar circumstances to hers, torment themselves and their friends with *ennui*. She was thus certain to give herself not only an enviable notoriety, but the reputation of a superior understanding. In this there was, perhaps, a taint of innocent selfishness. Johnson liked her social qualities, patrician breeding, and lively manners.

She invited to her house men of all creeds and parties, because their opinions had nothing to do in sharing her hospitalities. The peculiar circumstances attending her marriage were well known, at least, in cotemporary life. It would be unfair to judge her by the last score or two of years that she lived. My impression is that she had at no time superior mental attainments to other ladies in the circles of fashion, when youth and vivacity never fail to be attractive. She had some eccentricities, and I am inclined to think she was not of an amiable disposition, because she did not disguise her distaste of children, and this is a good criterion for judging of female character. To more advanced youth she was a torment in employing it for her various purposes. There were two sweet girls in their "teens," whose visits to town were few and far between, and had, therefore, little time for sight-seeing. She would drive to them in their lodgings of a forenoon, with a list of names, and occupy them with writing her notes of invitation until dinner time, knowing perfectly well how they were situated. I advised that they should not be "at home," for the exaction was unjustifiable. Sidney Smith admirably developed her character under another head, when he

made a species of allegory of her conduct, illustrative of that of the bishops towards the deans and chapters. His friend, Lady Cork, told him she was so deeply moved at his charity sermon, that she "borrowed" a sovereign of some one going out of church and put it into the plate. All the world knew her propensity for carrying off any thing upon which she chanced to lay her hands. "Don't leave those things about so, my dear, or I shall steal them," was, perhaps, said for her. She called one morning on Rogers the poet, and found him gone out, when she carried off most of the best flowers upon which he was choice. The poet of the epigrammatic month, could not forgive her for a good while, and the distance lasted nearly a whole year, when she wrote to him, that they were both very old, that he ought to forget and forgive, and closed her note with an invitation to dinner the next day. Rogers wrote her that he "would, come dine, sup, and breakfast with her," and thus their quarrel, which at their age, Lady Cork called ridiculous, was made up.

There is always something touching in the presence of a person who has survived several perished generations, a feeling of melancholy, perhaps the unconscious acknowledgment of a common destiny. I once felt it very strongly, on being alone with a centenarian.

When Earl Grey died, one of those names familiar to Englishmen for more than forty years, it seemed to be a relic gone of my earliest remembrances. His lordship had a property in the domain of mind which some, who came later on the stage, destitute of his experience, may not choose to acknowledge, but who will not soon be forgotten by the survivors of a departed generation.

Though a marked man, he did not impress a stranger in a moment with the pertinacity of his character. I was but a few times in his company, but here he did not shine. He was as unbending as in his political career. He had that rare prescience in public life which with an unqualified conviction of the results he anticipated from the fulfilment of his political views, always strengthened his faith in their efficiency. He relied upon the future for a corroboration of the justice of his opinions. No dread of superior power, no craven apprehension of ministerial vengeance, no sense of duty to the crown, separated from the people, ever weakened his determination, or abated in age a particle of his zeal in support of his early and far-seeing principles. The lapse of time did but strengthen the justice of his views, until the lagging age overtook him. Courageous in his youth, he was then only exceeded by Fox in the boldness of the truths he promulgated and supported. Reason was his leading star, and not an exaggerated and erroneous policy. Under defeat, he found sure consolation in prospective success, not losing one jot of his assurance in succeeding ultimately. It was no common courage that thus persevered in altering, in the teeth of its enemies, the former corrupt and irrational system of parliamentary representation. He was no every day man, whom neither lucre nor ambition could induce to deviate into compromise. No vulgar self-interest make swerve from a trust, no temporary applause change the determination. He had an indomitable regard for the public weal. He lived to see the calumniated measure he had so long supported, become the law of the land, though for more than half

a century vituperated. His victory was then achieved ; an honest glory illumined his brow, not the least consolatory of reflections in his dying hour. Content to do right, he left the harlot fame, and the unstable breath of popular applause to take their course, and his mission ended, gathered up his garments to take leave of the world with appropriate dignity. I even now see his tall spare form, his patrician carriage, and his reflective countenance, and hear his bold truthful utterance, with patriotism* still undauntedly reflected in his countenance. A friend of his 'order,' as he somewhat aristocratically styled it, he was equally a friend to popular freedom—who does not venerate the history of such a statesman ?

A short and unexpected correspondence once took place between Lord Althorp and myself, upon the application of tests of the value of the soil through chemical experiments. This correspondence originated in something his lordship said about agriculture, which induced me to think he was fully open to the fact which, since the corn law repeal, has been proved, that high cultivation must be attended with results greatly remunerative. His lordship said this would hold good to a certain extent, but that the farmers had not capital. I replied, " then let them lessen their holdings," their profits would be the same, and as the manufacturer was constantly improving his machinery, every seven or ten years witnessing something new and more economical, so it would be with the land. That there was, no doubt, a termination to the extent to which cultivation might be carried, but I did not think the land gave half the produce it might be made to do.

"You would carry it up to the perfection of a garden—that would never do."

"Why not, my lord?"

"Because neither materials for manuring nor other requisites can be obtained for the whole superficies."

"High cultivation and feed will make manure. I am persuaded half the land now in cultivation might be made to return the same quantity of produce."

"That is all theoretical."

"Theory before practice is the natural order of things. There may be impracticable theories but they must be proved so : doubt is the father of truth. I am certain that fifty thousand acres might soon be made to return more than seventy-five thousand do now."

"That may be true to a certain extent."

"It requires a larger capital, and the removal of the prejudices so inherent in the mind of the farmer."

"The farmers know what they are about—they are a shrewd race."

"And a prejudiced one, Lord Althorp. I have known two estates, the same in the quality of the land, in everything, and both let on lease. One tenant, on the expiration of his lease, wanted it renewed, with ten per cent taken off. The other only wanted a fourteen in place of a seven years' lease. The latter on being told that his neighbour could scarcely make both ends meet, and wanted ten per cent taken off the rent, replied, 'He does not know how to manage his land, he does what his father did before him, and won't admit any new fangle practices, as he calls them. I am content to pay the same rent, only I should like a fourteen years' lease.' He got it."

"That is true, I dare say, but how are landlords to convert their tenants to the right way of thinking?"

"By shewing them their interest."

"I believe some landlords require to be sent to school as well as the farmers."

"I do not say the farmers are all similarly impracticable, but a large majority."

His lordship, on my speaking of making experiments in order to prove some points I had advanced, and stating that what little I had observed of the farmers was in Wilts, while in the counties under his lordship's eyes they were a more improved race. I bore rather hard on some particular farmers whom I had met in Wiltshire, for their obstinate refusal to admit improvements, and thought that in such cases the landlord's should see to it. His lordship's last letter was dated from Hagley, April 1843, it wound up as follows :

"I think much good may be done by chemical experiments in farming, but in order that the results so procured may be properly tested, it is quite essential that they should be tried as farming, and not as gardening experiments. I believe that experiments on a small scale are the first steps to a more satisfactory trial.

"You very much underrate the intelligence and abilities of the practical farmers. They are much more likely to teach the landowners, than the landowners to teach them."

His lordship did not convince me. No doubt there are many farmers well able to instruct landowners, but farmers in general were not then able to do so from their heavy prejudices. I have narrowly observed the farmer in several counties, and found him in one county

bordering upon another, a man of a totally different class, both in mind and management of his business. My remarks to Lord Althorp were made with the reservation that I was not practical but theoretical, beyond what I had derived from desultory observation, and being country born. I often marvelled how this good natured, hearty, comfortable nobleman was ever manufactured into a Chancellor of the Exchequer. His appearance spoke a better and more honest vocation, a gentleman farming his own estate.

Standing on the verge of the last rocks looking at the Long Ship's light-house, and the vast expanse of ocean, a man in a sailor's jacket addressed me. He offered to take me to the Scilly isles in an open boat for a couple of guineas, but he could not answer how long we might be beating up with such a wind as I have before stated. I found my companion was a smuggler, and as I had not forgot the days of boyhood, when I knew many of those daring characters, before coast-guards were known, I put some leading questions to him, and won his confidence.

"Been at work lately, 'squag'd' away anything—how goes running now?"

"I haven't been tother side for a good while—I got six months a little while ago."

"How was that?"

"It was not my fault—a cargo was cleared, and the ship hauled off, but the skipper in place of washing out the hold got drunk. A revenue cutter boarded him—found nothing to seize, but smelled the liquor, and knew that a cargo was run. The cutter's boat landed, for they could not touch the ship. They searched the

cliffs, and found six ankers we had stowed away in a hole in the rocks, for we were too tired to carry them after the rest, so we left them till the next night. They kept a watch, and when we were going off seized them and us, and I got six months in jail."

Such a place as "the cliff," where they got up the cargo was fearful. The slightest false step would have been inevitable death, and yet they brought up all but six ankers where it would be thought impossible the foot could rest. Once up, the ankers were borne off by the miners, and soon placed in security beyond the reach of a coast guard or the smugglers themselves, in the intricate ramifications of the mines, from whence none but miners could dislodge them. These ramifications extend for miles under ground. Some of those in the consolidated mines in Gwennap, are said to extend fifty-five miles, from two hundred to a thousand feet from the surface or "grass" as the miners call it.

This smuggler told me he had not tasted bread for six months. He, as well as his neighbours, had a little land around their cottage where they planted potatoes and a few vegetables. They had a small boat, their joint property, in which they went out fishing by turns, for most of the people there understand gardening and fishing as well as mining. They divided the fish taken, salting some and drying others. In the mines they worked only eight hours in the twenty-four. Full time enough to pass in the close atmosphere below.

I deeply regretted to find that tithes, in some parishes, were exacted from these poor people's labour in fishing. They were generally levied in the shape of a sum on the boat, to be paid annually, in lieu of

the fish the owner took. It is a most indefensible tax, especially when, in stormy weather, these poor people can make no use at all of their boat. It is a vicious, unchristian, wicked tax upon the labour of the poor. It is still more obnoxious, when we reflect that before the Reformation, the fisherman, in gratitude for his preservation while pursuing his perilous employment, made a free will present of some fish to his priest, in the supposition of his prayers for him while out at sea. This, the Protestant priest has since declared to be tithe. We have no objection to profit by the superstitions we denounce. In some parishes the courts of law rid the people of this cruel burthen, in others it has been maintained on the same ground that profane swearing may be justified—custom.

In the parish of St. Buryan was a rectory, carrying with it the livings of St. Levan and of Sennen. The three contained three thousand souls, of which it may be presumed nearly one-half were Wesleyan Methodists. Since 1819, the three livings had been under the incumbency of one individual, who resided in London.

Of the two or three persons who remembered me, I inquired after particular individuals, some were known to them, and some death had taken. One in years had died a long time ago, tranquilly, with these remarkable words: "I shall soon be at home—I feel like a youth going from school for the holidays to his father's house." Some of my old companions had been victims in war, others had perished in burning climes. One sweet girl had died in misery in a London attic, abandoned by her husband to the want she was too proud to proclaim. The fate of some in hope and fortune very flattering, had been

unhappy, while others in school days condemned as bad, had turned out well in after life. The meanest-minded, and greatest liar in his school days, became a good naval officer, while another, gentlemanly and high-minded, with considerable mental endowments, killed himself with the bottle. Nothing can be more deceptive than the opinions we form in anticipation, regarding our youthful companions contrasted with subsequent realities.

Sir Charles Morgan died soon after my return to town. Until he came to London to reside, we had corresponded for several years. In allusion to one of the most truthful men I ever knew, I cannot avoid mentioning also Lady Morgan, although I do not profess to make mention of living cotemporaries. I do Lady Morgan feeble justice in recording her warm-heartedness, her eminent talents, her love of country, and sense of independence. I have nothing to retract, after thirty-four years' acquaintance, except my own apparent neglect in her regard, justified by absence and causes which I need not state. The fidelity of Lady Morgan to nature's truth, in her pictures of existing life, the advocacy she has ever displayed for what is just and generous, and the sympathy every honourable mind must feel in respect to the splenetic attacks made upon her by unmanly writers, are obvious things. Lady Morgan could well afford to pay the usual penalty of talent. She drew with a correct pencil the wrongs of her country, and laboured to inculcate on its enemies correct principles for its government. The attacks upon her in the "Quarterly Review," were generally attributed to Croker. This was a mistake. Croker,

bitter enough in his diatribes, knew what was due to woman—to the sex in the common run of decent society, lash those he censured as he might. I contended that he was not the author of the article to which I allude, and that it was Gifford, with whom vulgarity was inherent. The fact was as I have stated, on authority I cannot doubt. Lady Morgan described high society in low colours, oftener than low in high. Keen, satirical, full of fancy, if not genius, humorous, clever, how could she live and write truthfully, without enemies? I speak irrespective of her politics, and add my tribute of respect to her talents. She had a sister, too, Lady Clarke, who possessed considerable talents, much humour, and great acuteness. Alas! she now only recalls the line:

How swift the shuttle flies that weaves the shroud!

Having read some of the verses of Clare with great delight, I visited him at Dr. Allen's asylum for the insane in Epping Forest. The patients there were not confined, but were allowed to ramble about the grounds, and amuse themselves as they felt agreeable. I found Clare in a field cutting up thistles, a little, mild man of insignificant person, who, on my approach, stood still, leaning upon the instrument with which he had been working. His manner was perfectly unembarrassed, his language correct and fluent. He appeared to possess great candour and openness of mind, and much of the temperament of genius. There was about his manner no tincture of rusticity—what a mystery is genius! that it should thus change and humanise natural character. He conversed on various topics, and never

but once did he show any eccentricity of mind. It was in the midst of some remarks on Childe Harold, when an observation upon boxing interrupted the course of the conversation for a minute, and then there was a recurrence to the original topic again, just as if one thought had intruded upon and overlaid another, and then withdrawn itself. Dr. Allen told me that the mind of Clare was so little affected, he might as well have been away. He said that he wanted books and the society of women, where he then was, and wished to be at home, to which I believe he soon afterwards returned. In his descriptions of rural objects, in their minuter details, he is the first of our poets. Every leaf and fibre of vegetation seem to have been regarded with a poet's eye, and elevated above their common place. His simple pictures are irresistably pleasing. Bloomfield does not approach him in accuracy of description. That he should not be relished in great cities is natural, his simple verse has no congeniality with brick-work streets, but in the country, with those who love nature, he deserves to be a favourite.

I published a pamphlet, entitled "Plain sense Reasons for the Treaty of July, 1840, for Maintaining the Integrity of Turkey," supporting Lord Palmerston's policy. On glancing at this pamphlet, which appeared without the writer's name, nearly seventeen years ago, at the time the Treaty of Hunkiar Skellesi was nullified, there appeared something like the spirit of divination when the late war with Russia is taken into account.

"It must be remembered that the treaty of Adrianople, which concluded a war of Russian aggression, gained her another important step in her favourite object. She adroitly made herself the protector of the Porte as the wolf might make himself the protector of the lamb. The safe mode of judging the true object of Russia's policy, is to take the opposite of her avowals as the course which she is following. Let her statements be compared on past occasions, from the time when aggressions were falsely charged upon Turkey, and tens of thousands cruelly butchered for no other reason than that Potemkin might get the order of St. George, down to this hour. Every negotiation between Turkey and Russia has been a most impudent piece of double dealing on the Russian side; Russia was always the aggressor, charging the Turks with what was false as an excuse for plundering them of their territory. At one time Russian commerce in the Black Sea was said to be endangered by the Dardanelles being in Turkish power—Russian commerce *by the Dardanelles!*"

Again:—

"Even as it is, Russia will not remain long idle under the treaty. She takes credit for her signature to it, *but she will intrigue to sow dissension between the other European powers, or make dupes of them for her own interests.* She will omit no opportunity of recovering her lost ground by perseverance unflagging and unrevealed, except by its effects. She will trust to time for success, nor dream of resigning her project. Her junction with the other powers can only be regarded as a result of that policy which knows how to conceal disappointed hope under a graceful address."

Again:

"When secretly chagrined, no false pride governs Russia; she will never run her head against a wall, as parties in other countries do without looking to consequences. The other great powers of Europe, bound to resist any attack upon Turkey, she felt that on the ground so far gained towards the fulfilment of her darling object she must be content to encamp—the "pear was not yet ripe," she must "bide her time"—dissimulation, not aggression, must be the order of the day. Russia knew that half-a-dozen British line of battle ships, and double that number of steamers and frigates in the Black Sea, and 40,000 Austrians sent down the Danube to Rutchuk or Silistria in aid of the Turks, and either the Danube frontier of Bulgaria might be maintained, or the Balkan line from Varna to the Turnova road, and that route itself be rendered impregnable. Russia knew that her hopes upon the Caucasians must be defeated, her disinterested subjects round the Black Sea stimulated to rebellion, and her establishments destroyed. She considered that her Baltic ports blockaded and her vast territories subjected to alarm from the arming of the other powers against her, the thing was not to be prudently dared; to which must be added the consideration, that the first step to ensure success upon Turkey must always be the exclusion of a foreign power from the Dardanelles. If England has an interest in the integrity of Turkey, Austria has a greater. Her enormous frontier from the north-eastern Carpathian mountains to the Danube, and from the Danube to the Save at Semlin, and from Semlin to the Unna, and from the Unna to Badna, close on the southern Adriatic, would become exposed to a very different enemy from the Turk. Even the delay of such an occupation for a few years

would be an advantage to Austria. The stolid and absolute Francis no more, science has moved upon the waters of the Danube, and the efforts of Count Szechenzi to multiply steam-boats on that river will enable the present more enlightened emperor to send thirty or forty thousand men down in a week to any point of the Turkish frontier which the Czar may menace. Austria, besides the dread of Russian aggrandizement, has an interest in the treaty of July, upon the all-absorbing ground of self-preservation. France as well as England must double her Mediterranean armaments in peace and war in case of a Russian occupation of Turkey. Her frontiers become exposed to a new aggression, or the possibility of it, and a new intermeddler takes a part in all proceedings upon the Mediterranean shores."

That Russia should have miscalculated a little in regard to the cordial co-operation of France with England was not matter of wonder. She judged from past experience. The firm rule of the Emperor Napoleon was not foreseen by Russia. She thought of M. Thiers, and based her calculations upon the Jesuitism of the old diplomacy.

I could not avoid this episode, which may be set down to the satisfaction or vanity everybody feels at the development of their own peculiar views after the lapse of years, if it be at all a sort of self-compliment.

CHAPTER VIII.

CLEVER as Hook was in many things, there were none of his talents which he did not abuse. He died about this time. In his writings, he was lively and imaginative. His heroes and heroines were sometimes his butts, and he had much of a peculiar kind of humour, with great natural vivacity. He was the readiest man at a reply I ever knew, but his repartees were more often allied to puns than genuine wit, and he left no good sayings. His animal spirits were extraordinary, and during the latter half of his life sustained too frequently by the bottle. He continually played the buffoon, and that with a heavy as well as a light heart, a melancholy species of double-dealing, while in both cases there was the same apparent flow of spirits, the same self-possession, and the same effrontery. Principle he had none. His impromptu performances in verse and music were extraordinary, his practical jokes ever too ready, even in the earlier part of his career. With all his vivacity and readiness, his insults even to strangers, and his mockeries of Heaven itself, he was not courageous. Sir Robert Wilson

wrote him, that if his name appeared again in the "John Bull" paper, he would flog him as long as he could hold a whip. His name appeared there no more. His talents were misused, and the conventional decencies of society continually outraged. Strange things he did in the earlier part of his life, when his spirits were overflowing to a degree of madness.

On his return from the Isle of France, a prisoner for defalcations in his accounts, he hit upon the establishment of a party newspaper, by which he hoped to propitiate the ruling powers, by making an idol of George IV. The "John Bull" newspaper, in those days, for it has long ceased to be obnoxious to such a charge, he made in everything he opposed to the advance of the age. Its columns were filled with lampoons upon defenceless women; it was coarse and licentious in language, and neither virtue nor religion were spared in its columns. It got into a large circulation, and returned Hook, as the price of his labour, several thousands a-year. He lived up to his receipts, and beyond them. There was a story, too, about a fine paid for the paper getting into Hook's hands. He doubled his potations, he became the guest at men's tables, where he was invited to make a show of himself, and degrade literary talent, while those whom he had diverted with his "quips and cranks," and jests, and his easy morality, if, indeed, he can be said ever to have had any morality at all, chose to forget their obligations to him.

A more useful lesson to young and gifted men, than that furnished by the life of Hook, could not be depicted in fiction: talent misapplied, religion ridiculed,

honour set at nought, were painfully evident throughout his career. I never felt for him the smallest respect, but much pity.

A-propos of Hook, I remember he was once greatly pressed for five hundred pounds, and wanted it advanced to him. A biblioplist I knew, refused unless he had some evidence that he should have his money's worth, a portion first, at all events. Hook went home, sat up all night, wrote an introduction to a novel "on a new plan," appended a hurried chapter, and showed it the next day, with the assertion that he had been offered most liberally for it elsewhere, and brought off the money in his pocket.

I met him at Captain Marryat's one morning, and told him my mind, in consequence of his unmanly attacks on Mrs. Coutts.

She had given an entertainment, at Holly Lodge, to the theatrical people. Haydon, the artist, told me that he was there, and that the feasting and overmuch wine soon carried the company beyond reasonable control, but that it was an abuse of the hospitality of the lady hostess, for which she was not to blame. This served Hook as the basis for one of his disgraceful diatribes. When Mrs. Coutts became Duchess of St. Albans, it was said she paid ten thousand pounds to obtain an admission to court. The sum was said to have passed into elevated hands, which court, at the same time, Hook was bedaubing with praise. On whom, then, was the disgrace reflected, on the party who bought, or the party who sold the goods, if it was a disgrace? She was troubled, too, at the attacks made upon her by other papers, that lived by libels. There is a story that, at a

ball she gave, after she was duchess, she wore a bracelet with a motto twice repeated—"Keep up your spirits—keep up your spirits!" On being asked what the words meant, she replied that, one night she had gone to bed in low spirits, on account of the abuse dealt out to her by Hook and the "Age," and that she dreamed she saw Mr. Coutts, who said to her, "Keep up your spirits" twice, and she had had the bracelet made as a memento of the advice. This shows how it affected her feelings. I remember the duchess, when Miss Mellon, taking shelter from a shower of rain in a shop in Pall Mall, where I was standing in the same dilemma. I sent for a coach, and handed her into it. She was then a comely, and, apparently, a very good-natured and agreeable lady. With her vast fortune, the desire of a title was a vanity—a very common one. The abuse she received from Hook was mean and cowardly.

Horace Twiss, with his grave countenance, who should have been called single-speech, for he made but one good speech in Parliament, was a sober and attentive man of business—his solemnity sometimes passing for extra wisdom. One day, going to see a friend in the Temple, I met him on the ground floor. "Come with me," said he, "Twiss is rehearsing; don't make a noise." Horace had to be down at the house that evening. We peeped through the key-hole, hearing him in practice, and saw him address the tongs, placed upright against the bars, as "Mr. Speaker;" but we could not hear all the oration. The hon. member preserved wondrous gravity, and the tongs, falling, said to himself, "Aye, now the speaker has left the chair." Twiss had no genius, but was, as I should imagine, a

a safe and trustworthy man of business, who might be securely relied upon. The penetration of the Duke of Wellington discovered this, to which Twiss mainly owed a short official career, so unlucky for himself, through no fault of his own. Though often one in snug conversational dinner-parties, the larger part composed of the wits of the hour, he cut no more of a figure among them than myself. I believe, however, that his judgment was sounder than that of any of the circle to which I allude, and that he was an honest, upright man.

The worship of money, defined the "God of trade," in past time, has lowered the character of trade itself, which may be too frequently defined the "art of over-reaching." I often received from those with whom I was connected, copies of certain works, which it was requested might go into the publication as editorial paragraphs, always sent down to the country by London agents. To these I generally refused insertion, often against the remonstrances of the proprietary, that could never understand why a thing paid for should not have its money's worth. Among some were puffs and commendations of Lady Blessington.

Anything like rank on a book-cover made a work be read and admired among the classes which ape fashion, and imagine they obtain respect by talking about people of title. It is one of the most extraordinary marks of deficient intellect wherever we see this humiliation of mind; and, in the present case, the dealers determined to make the most of it. Lady Blessington, shrewd, clever, from long practice, not among the best of mankind, and tolerably hacknied in what were not

exactly the virtues of any age, began a speculation in a literary way, in order to turn her "fair" fame to account, near the end of her fortune's feast. She invited herself, and deputed others to invite, literary men, from Lord Brougham to penny-a-liners, who had naturally no objection to dine with a fine woman, if not quite *en règle*, and somewhat gone in years, who wished to play Aspasia, though history informs us the lapses of the Grecian lady were simple and uncompounded. A friend was deputed to ask me, but I declined, not that I censured any man for accepting the lady's disinterested invitations, for men might do so and not injure caste; but I knew her gross early history, and disrelished her on that account. No lady, who regarded her own reputation, on the other hand, could possibly visit her; that was a very different affair.

The literary visitors could not be without some sensation allied to obligation in return, all which the lady speculated upon, and not without good grounds. She was a fine woman; she had understood too well how to captivate the other sex. She had won hearts, never having had a heart to return. No one could be more bland and polished, when she pleased. She understood from no short practice, when it was politic to be amiable, and yet no one could be less amiable, bland and polished when her temper was roused. Her language being then well-suited to the circumstances of the provocation, both in style and epithet. Mr. Manners Sutton forbade her his house, having been married to her sister. As to her writings, her facts were, I fear, often fictions, as in her account of conversations with Byron, of whom she saw but little in a passing way.

The noble poet was no more ; she could not be contradicted. 'This was, no doubt, felt by one who had been schooled in every phase of indifferent society. Campbell visited her once, but found it distasteful. He disliked her. The gentry of this country, of all political creeds, are frequently censured for their pride and exclusiveness ; but they may sometimes be proud and exclusive to no ill end. The higher ranks have their exceptions, as well as others, of which Lord Blessington himself was an instance. The dissipation of Lord Blessington's fortune, and the reception of Lady Blessington's favourite, the handsome youth, D'Orsay, into Lord Blessington's house, ran together, it has been said, before the finish of his education. Old Countess D'Orsay was scarcely able to do much for her son, owing to the narrowness of her income ; but no family could be more respectable than hers. Lord Blessington was a weak-minded creature, and his after-dinner conversations, when the wine was in, became wretchedly maudlin. He then let out some odd sayings occasionally. But enough ; the injudicious would do better to let such reputations die off.

I had called on a lady one morning, I remember, in St. James's Place, and a few minutes afterwards Count d'Orsay's card was sent up. The answer was, "Not at home."

"Why, Lady ——," I observed, "you cannot refuse the handsome dandy, the successor of Brummel in the world of fashion—how is this?"

"Oh ! I cannot receive him. No lady can do so that respects herself. Remember, there must be a limit somewhere in society."

On rising to go away, the footman again came into

the room with another card. It was from a duchess, one of our oldest.

"There," said Lady —, as I wished her good morning, "I should never have that card again, if I had received D'Orsay."

Whatever charges Lord Brougham may bring against the aristocracy in his wholesale manner, they have still a respect, at least, some of the female part of it, for what is due to morality and religion, if it be not exhibited beyond external conduct. The virtuous ladies of the aristocracy are not to be classed as Lord Brougham classed them, although many of them may be, and no doubt are, conceited, ignorant, and arrogant enough. His lordship, I take it, was never an Adonis, in ladies' eyes, and, perhaps, when he wrote, he was returning the compliment on this reflection. Beauty, grace, kindness, and agreeable manners, distinguish no few of these libelled fair ones, in social intercourse. To libel all for the sins of a part is not just.

Lord Dillon, whom I have already mentioned, died about the time I was in the West. He was a gentlemanly man, handsome, and a great talker. I first met him in Paddington, at dinner in the house of a friend, who gave old-fashioned repasts. He would sometimes get a person into a corner, and hold him in conversation until his hearer became fidgetty. It was impossible to show impatience at what so well-bred a man addressed to you. The misfortune was, that though he talked so well, he talked in such an unbroken chain of words, that you could not, as the Frenchman said, "get even the respite of a comma into his affluence of speech." His lordship had lived much in Italy,

and knowing the country well, was entertaining in his remarks upon the country and people. He was also a complete master of Irish politics. He had a seat at Ditchly in Oxfordshire, to which I had many a kind invitation.

Captain Morris died at ninety years of age. Of whom, too, I knew a little in my earlier life. He was song inditer to the Prince of Wales, and the wits who were the Prince's companions. Clever, and abounding in that species of talent which those who pushed social habits to excess, most valued, Morris set no bounds to the licentiousness of his productions. Writings of that class are nearly extinct. This, at least, is in favour of the present age, though it may be doubted whether such publications do as much harm as insidious stories, which treat principle as of no moment, and taint the mind by familiarizing it with base and low character, in apparent innocence of intention. Works, the character of which is open, and the offensiveness apparent, are thrown aside by the well-intentioned, and repudiated at once. It is not so with works, the slower poison of which is disguised with apparent decency, as apothecaries disguise nauseous medicines with sweets. I knew but little of Morris. There is a veil over modern profligacy; and it is not like the old, made a boast.

Scott, the great master of fiction, remarked that the works read in his childhood would not now be tolerated. I can assert the same of those in my youth. This was said in reference to language, the latent morality may be no better, but this is something gained. It is to be feared, however, that there is a falling off in the

old strait-lacedness as to the choice of society. We see persons tolerated in the social circle, among the middle classes now, who stigmatized by the law of the land, would have been formerly avoided. It is the practice to affect incredulity or ignorance regarding such persons. This comes of judging things by external appearance, by profession, and false pretences. All that looks well must be so. "Oh, mamma!" said the child, "if that goose had but the feathers of our peacock, how excellent the creature would be." We labour to appear in peacock's feathers, to be fine, and be taken for what we are not. Not loving the truth, we seek to conceal it. The politician stifles it, the lawyer scouts it, the churchman falsifies it, the patrician disowns it, and the plebeian's prejudice scouts it.

I published a tale called "Velasco," printing only a small number, in consequence of the unparalleled depression of the bookselling trade at the time. I endeavoured, in that work, to revive the old practice of including something more than mere narrative in my design. I had observed that most works of fiction were without any acknowledged object, except to "amuse the galleries," as a player would phrase it. In the delineations of character, there was a little, but a very little touch of caricature, in order to be more attractive. The reader is seldom entertained with a picture exact and in keeping. Exaggeration is everything. I did not write the work for the many-headed multitude, which comprehends no more than is connected with everyday life at home, already more faithfully pourtrayed than I could pretend to do it. I sought to please educated persons by two-fold allusions,

in a portraiture of things a century old. As to fidelity to the manners and customs of the Spaniards at the time to which the tale relates, I had the satisfaction of receiving the acknowledgments of several discerning natives of the South. My acquaintance with the people of that country, at home and on the continent, had not been inconsiderable, during the reign of Ferdinand VII., who was king at the time I visited the north of the country. I was never in Madrid or Valencia, but I have been told that my account of the latter province is very correct, under such a circumstance, and a writer in "Frazer" stated my description to be marvellously so. I sought to please those who had read and thought. This is become a most important distinction in writing.

There were allusions which none but educated persons could comprehend. I was not solicitous that those "educated" in the present phrase, that is those who can only read and write legibly, should read my work at all. I used a few Spanish words to impart an appearance of greater reality, and for no other end. It can scarcely be denied that an author has a right to carry out his own views and objects, however deficient he may be in the execution. One critic, who had heard of "Gil Blas," I say "heard" because he could not have read it, declared there was that similitude between the two works, which if he had read the last he would have found existed in his own mind alone. Another accused me of imitating Borrow. The work was written before Borrow appeared. In treating of the same people and manners, there must be some similitude in all such cases, if truth be honestly observed,

and the relation to manners and customs faithfully portrayed. The fact is, we have ten good authors for one mediocre critic, the reason being that modern critics too frequently have been shaped out of unsuccessful authors, to a far greater extent than in the days of Dennis and Cibber.

I have mentioned Mr. Moir of Musselburg, the Delta of "Blackwood's Magazine," under Wilson's editorship. When I heard of his death, I began to re-peruse his natural and beautiful verses. There is a fascination about some writers, which in spite of himself, holds the reader within a circle of enchantment, from which, if he extricate himself from their pages, laying them aside, the mind will not be so easily freed from their influence. Moir's poetry was to me precisely of this class. His lines remained impressed on the sensorium, and were continually repeated amid busy scenes in crowded streets, and even in the social circle, as if they would claim a corner of the soul to themselves, come what might in the way to divert attention from them. Many are full of truth and unaffectedness. Moir had no mannerism, none of the verbiage of hackneyed versifiers, who make rhyme, and call it poetry. He was not one of the favourites of mystery, who treat poetry as an enigma, to be disclosed by the initiated only, while the majority of his avowed admirers applauded the obscurity their vision could not penetrate, valuing most that which they least comprehended. He was full of true feeling. Pleasure or pain, grandeur or beauty, were really felt by him, not simulated, and he showed great gentleness and tenderness of soul. It was impossible not

to enter into sympathy with such a writer. He sought not to amaze by startling trickery. Like Shakspeare, nature was his guide, and he read men and things in her book. He cultivated the flowers that she presented, and like the judicious florist, sought in this to make them more agreeable, by adding the advantage of a better site and soil, rather than change that by efforts at improvement, which it was beyond the power of art to effect. Thus in an age when to adhere to nature, and to the chaste in poetry is too transcendant for the time, Moir's poetry will still be treasured by the judicious few, and will be more admired when true taste in poetry returns to us. That such a writer should have fit audience, though few, is natural when Shakspeare and Milton are neglected. Moir was the last striking poet whom Scotland has produced. I regret not having preserved all his letters.

The death of this mild, meek man was worthy of his life and genius. He, too, is departed with that galaxy of names which for so many years were prized by cultivated minds. Moir's merit has not been more acknowledged, because only the few have the power of comprehending similar works of genius. The many once lived upon the opinions of the qualified and discriminating few. Now, all are self-constituted judges in everything, from the kitchen to the attic. Taste is supposed to be everywhere, coming to man by nature, in place of proceeding from high intellectual cultivation, combined with natural gifts, hence the present multiplication of mediocrity, and the want of taste for the best things.

I had once an argument with Martin, the artist, after reciting some lines of Moir's, in regard to the advantage

of silence and solitude for composition, in art as well as in letters. In regard to the latter, he thought it of less importance than in art. I showed him that the greatest works of intellect were produced in solitude, often amid the stillness of the night, so favourable for reflection. Some think best under the shady side of a summer wood, or on the lonely ocean shore, wherever meditation can reign uninterrupted. Smart composed in solitary confinement, amid the lucid intervals of insanity, his noble Song to David, so often alluded to by different authors. Napoleon combined his ambitious plans in seclusion. The unfurnished mind preys upon its habitation when in solitude, whence proceeds the insanity of criminals sentenced to solitary confinement as a punishment. Well-stored minds, on the other hand, in such cases, fall back upon their own resources, combining, composing and recalling from the store-house of memory, for use or sustenance, the inexhaustible material reading and association have laid up.

Fashion is against this view, for to that the world is everything; but we are not better fitted for obedience to the laws of fashion, which dictate to vulgar minds of all classes, by the purification of the heart, the justness of the taste, or the soundness of the understanding. Some of the best principles inculcated by nature, and the more rational habits, must be changed, independence of soul bartered, and latent hearts employed to win praises from tongues cankered with envy, while bestowing fashionable adulation. It is generally this adulation, the most fleeting, that is most valued, because it is the most palpable. It is a waste of breath, for example, bestowed by the orator, unless he desire immediate

action, when its importance must be admitted, passion being all prevalent when that is the case. Some comprehend little, others more, but everywhere now the cry is, "Speak down to them; none of your rhetoric; use their own vernacular; they are the majority; they do not want to be taught a better tongue than they use." Yet the majority of modern audiences are awake to the addresses of fashion, if unmoved by Demosthenian appeals. In the latter case, they are like the man, who, when the French orator, Beaugirard, was uttering the most interesting and sublime apostrophes, stood with his mouth open, his eyes intently fixed on the speaker, and then proved the nature of the effect upon himself, by exclaiming, aloud, "*Comme il sue !*"

In conversation it is much the same thing, while conviction is not easily produced when there is a feeling of personal pride operating against it. Writing is the better and more permanent means of producing an effect on every well-informed mind. "On ne parle jamais," says a French author, in another case, "avec autant de force que l'on peut écrire à un individu, auquel son rang et l'habitude font accorder de grands égards," substituting "effect" for "force." This is undoubtedly true of writing, where the reason is appealed to for conviction. For my own part, when I address a number of people extempore, I am too much borne along by my imagination. Cold men are the best and most conclusive speakers, yet the men of imagination impress their audiences more rapidly, led by some inspiring, unpremeditated impulse. As to the degree of attention in the hearer, it is proportioned to the power or the bitterness poured out by the speaker. Truth, reason, and justice, being

forgotten, in admiration of the delivery, or the ill-nature. Hence, we wonder the oration that electrified us reads so tamely in print.

As I grow older, I become more partial to the country. Lamb's dislike to the country, born and bred in London as he was, seems rational, and equally so that he loved ale and tobacco, attachments worthy of those who dislike flowers, eschew a garden, and love any but particularly low company. Lamb felt himself at home there. He owned, too, that he had a delicacy for sheep-stealers. Were not the Edinburgh reviewers right—could such a man be a poet! His charming essays came from his own habitual feelings and the peculiarities of his social life, and were faithful pictures of certain realities allied with that feeling. Poetry is a different thing, at least that poetry which confers a lasting reputation. A poet born, bred, and educated in a town, with none but urban associations, is like a stall-bred ox, that never pastured.

The most perfect condition when we enjoy health, is not the town. It is to dwell in the midst of nature, to live in the open air as much as possible, in the garden or field, when the climate will admit of it. To take wholesome exercise under the canopy of heaven, and receive good or ill with composure and resignation. No matter for caste and fashion, these are for the high and low vulgar. With a habit of activity in the country, mingling the thoughts acquired from association with those generated by the diversity continually presented by nature on every hand—talk not of sameness—I speak of those occupied—there is more

in a town life, disguised somewhat by the bustle. In the country we mingle better among the groupings of the shadowy past, throw ourselves more uninterruptedly into the ages which have perished, converse better with the dead, and make more in the existing present of departed scenes. It is well in country or town to have recurrence to the deeds of other years. I wander, in fancy, to Palestine, ascend Mount Tabor, tread the valley of Jehoshaphat; or, at a later time, turn to Godfrey of Bouillon, and to the Lion-hearted King, who fought for and took the Holy Sepulchre. To hear the words of power the combatants uttered, leading their armies to the onset; or to go further back to the time when the Israelitish king reared his temple within the walls of Jerusalem, directing the mind to the history of the four great extinct empires of the East: to ask where are their perished myriads, the differing manners, habits, races, that for so many ages bustled with their innumerable generations through their respective periods, and left no "wreck behind?" These things lead to meditation on the nature and destiny of man. Next, the subject shifts to less weighty things, to innocent pleasures, to anything but artificial life in great cities. I am neither sleepless with the cares of a contemplated overreaching of others in trafficking speculations, nor with unhappiness of soul, that my cash account is not yet as close as I promised myself it would be to the value of that of my next door neighbour. All was calmness and peace with me when living as I have, unhappily, but seldom been able to do, from the pressure of labour. Then, though, existing, as people say, from hand to mouth, in

the bosom of nature, unvexed by distempered passions, I have been as happy as a man can be, who is never idle, because no idle man can be happy.

In this way I contrived to enlarge the most confined local horizon, participating in and drinking those spiritualities, which depend upon the imagination as well as the reason. I have beguiled what might be tedious with active employment. I have kept hope unclouded, elevating the view, and endeavouring as much as possible worthily. Thus avoiding trifling with, or treating principles as a chimera, the sin of the present time, and escaping a degeneracy into that indifference or apathy so fatal, when one pursuit absorbs the whole of our time and labour. It is with the individual as with the mass, when fixed to one solitary pursuit; the mind degenerates as the desire of attainment becomes more intense; we cease to observe more than one confined scene, and fall into intellectual stagnation, as they do who give their souls to accumulation. One half of these search and do not find, and the other half, which does find, is ever discontented and unhappy. I lived contentedly in the country at one time, till forced back again where, to my seeming, the mighty intellect does not balance the inconveniences and self-denials, we must encounter to enjoy it.

I find books, every where, the great and enduring intellectual pleasure, when good society is scant. They are invaluable when right worthy. Marble and brass perish, for they are material; worthy books are the embodied mind, and from being continually renewed, like the youth of the eagle, they run a rival course with the great globe itself. As an emanation

of the loftier spirits among men, they are ever vernal, despite the rapid current of wintry years. I would rather sit and read Montagne under a shady oak in summer, than partake in the luxury of palaces.

I had never, until M. Thiers published his last historical work, translated any publication for the press, except for my own amusement. I was solicited to undertake that narrative, because, by adding some observations in the shape of notes, it constituted a copyright edition. The remarks I made were principally relative to the statements of M. Thiers regarding the navy and its movements, which were exceedingly partial and inaccurate. I completed no less than seven volumes—rather a heavy task. Whatever may be the merit of this author in his descriptions of land battles, he cannot be commended for those of his naval combats. Perhaps the familiarity of Englishmen with nautical matters may make them somewhat too critical with writers, who have not had the same opportunities of acquiring a knowledge of similar affairs. Thiers was much commended by the press, with the exception of his display of sundry Gallic predispositions. The critical charity of the day was wonderful a little time ago, especially where the proprietors of the works criticised advertised largely with the noticed publication. It would be hard to censure a virtue so exemplary, often, indeed, a species of repression of an indignant feeling, in presence of a vulgar interest. There is something magnanimous in overlooking the errors of our kind, where the diffusion of our charity may, as in a matter of criticism, be injurious to the public opinion of our judgment. It is

true the expense of our commendation is no extravagant outlay, and the semblance of magnanimity is flattering to our pride. There is a secret in the unmerited panegyric which looks us unblushingly in the face in the columns of a journal. Can the critic have read the work? Did he cut open more than the first half-a-dozen pages? If he did, how was it possible he remained so profoundly ignorant of its inanities? But these at the worst were peccadilloes through which, as Colburn the bookseller used to say, a hundred pounds "discreetly" laid out in advertising would make any book go down, because the advertisements toned the criticism. The more pretending reviewers in those days, on the other hand, made an author only a peg upon which to suspend a political treatise. Southey, having recanted, tortured an unfortunate Whig or Radical in the "Quarterly," full of inspiration from his later political creed. The "Edinburgh" returned the compliment, and poured the phial of its wrath on the head of Wilson Croker, or some scion of a noble house who had mistaken his vocation, and tried his hand at a dissertation upon a subject incomprehensible to his nature, in place of being at Melton or looking after the kennel in his homestead.

Such was reviewing, as it is styled, in the time past. It was first the child of party, next of venality. A vocation often too undertaken from lack of ability for authorship, or lack of generosity in common dealing. It was no matter, no part of the consideration, that the general reader should not be misinformed upon the merits of what he was tempted to purchase and read; no matter that the critic should tell the

truth to the best of his judgment, without favour or affection, without the bias of political animosity, or the unworthy motive of private pique. It would be highly serviceable that the young reader, just beginning to think, should know the difference between bombast and sterling merit, that the eye should learn to separate the chaste form of the antique vase from the shape of the common earthen pitcher turned out of hand by the village clown. There are men who have been honest critics, as there have been women virtuous from never having been placed in circumstances of temptation to be otherwise. Not long ago the temptations to this species of human frailty were so rarely wanting, that they overdid the part, and at length people ceased to purchase and read works because the well-known columns of this paper, or that review applauded them, or refrained from the purchase on account of their condemnation. The spirit of trade, encroaching upon, and thus ruling in literature, and pressing down literary men and honest truth, inflicted upon it irremediable injury, by subjecting it to all the arts of the counter. The essence of literature was, and is in direct opposition to such a spirit. Thus it is that the influence of gain prostrates, in the end, that which is sociably useful, corrupting or converting all to its advantage, until it works out its own ruin by its insatiate desires.

The influence of reviews was owing, in their best days, to there being always so many individuals out of those who read, who cannot think at all, do not think sufficiently, or will not take the trouble to think if they are able, being content that others should judge for them. This would not be so irrational, if the

reviewer were a recognized authority on the subject treated upon, but the reviewer behind his anonymous character, may really know little worth while on the subject upon which he is most magniloquent. Nothing can better explain our habitual servitude to custom, and our senselessness of action than this circumstance. Men are content to receive and adopt as their own opinions of which the want of attention disables them from examining the validity.

But there is generally something "providential," as ignorant people say, which prevents every evil from not having in it the germs of some good. The system of rivalry in reviewing shook that censorious and exclusive exhibition of feeling, which influential individuals once showed towards men of merit. Milton was sneered at by one of these as the "old blind school-master," who had written a work, the only merit of which, if it was one, was its length. *Cowper's "Task" was pronounced "good moral stuff." Other examples might be quoted, but the rivalry of the critics at a later date, would have caused the merits of such authors to be canvassed, and more justice done them.

The discussions which take place in many of our publications, and in the reviews, as well upon the merit of the authors of the last as well as the present centuries, in regard to the worth of the works of the dead rather than the living, seem to show a reluctance to deliver living opinions upon living men, a thing not observable twenty years ago. It would seem as if some writers, afraid of committing themselves, took the course recorded by a French writer:—"On remarqua surtout que la plupart des ouvrages littéraires

du siècle present, ainsi que les conversations, roulent sur l'examen des chef-d'œuvres du dernier siècle. Notre mérite est de discuter leur mérite. Nous sommes comme des enfans desherités qui font le compte du bien de leurs pères."

It is true that nine-tenths of the new works are works of fiction, and that original writing upon subjects of depth, or upon science, or metaphysics, or poetry, meets no encouragement, however ingenious. Those, therefore, who read for any object beyond amusement, must turn to authors of the preceding time to be gratified. Fortunately, there is no want of these. The decadence of our literature will probably be coincident with the exhaustion of subjects for fictitious novelties. The public will never turn from the non-instructive, to the more intellectual order of books as some suppose. The present course obliterates the relish which might else tempt a reference to works sufficiently agreeable to excite a desire for solid information in minds accustomed only to read what makes no call upon the thinking faculty. The effect of making the low things of life, low sentiments, and language predominant, by the selection of the hero of the tale from vicious and vulgar grades, has tended to direct thought and language in a remarkable manner, to analogous objects. They are not now the great efforts of science, the more worthy results of advanced and elevated usage, which become the themes of public conversation and applause, but the coarse and mean. This leads to the extinction of those aspirations which raise character, by making much of petty achievements, and carrying out crochetty littlenesses. In literature, at present, the attachment to

the best style and most meritorious works of the past is rarely among the more youthful of the community. "Read Jenkins, who reads Milton now?" Shakespeare is no longer the great poet in his own country, foreign farce concocted, draws the multitude to the theatre.

In literature, the writers of antiquity are wholly banned. The effect is seen in society continually. The Eton boy, when he put on the man, used to carry in his heart's core the recollection of passages of classical antiquity, and a knowledge of history and heroic character. Over his wine, among his friends, he recurred to those productions of the mind which have conquered time, interwoven as they were with the delightful period of his earlier years. Sometimes this might have been carried too far, but such an abuse was only that of great and noble things. Now such conversation seems shunned, even by those capable of supporting it, as if it were a forbidden topic, or the scholar was ashamed, and feared to contravene the fashion for low things. The doings of every day traffic were once laid aside in social hours, which thus became hours of relaxation from diurnal duties. At present, the latter supersede the former altogether at the hurried dinner-table, "the feast of reason and flow of soul" being almost unknown.

Such a state of affairs is symptomatic of anything but elevation of mind and sound mental advance. It may help the exchequer, but the nation that lives upon commercial tendencies alone is most rapid in its decadence after a short-lived duration at its maximum. Such seems to me to be marks of our present position, and its inclinations. We are a great and powerful

people, but as the boxer trained for the ring to the highest pitch of strength and activity, can retain the maximum of strength but a very short space of time, so it is with the might of nations, if their history in bygone days may be any criterion for judging of their destiny. The greatness of empires, as well as of individual men, is based upon continued aspirations, after what is better, and the admiration of things honest, enlarged, and elevated.

I was recently highly amused at seeing the outlay for books in a library in a city.—Novels and Romances, £180 ; Arts and Sciences, £1 10s. 6d. ; Natural History, £4 10s. ; Poetry, £2 9s. 6d.

At present no one concerned in any department of literature but lays claim to the character of a critic. The old writers deemed no one fit for the office that had not some acquaintance with the subject upon which he exhibited his judgment. Fortunately the better order of the craft was above the hypercritical character where the general merit was evident, especially in remarks upon works of real genius. Old Horace says :

“————— non ego paucis
Offendor maculis, quas aut incuria fudit,
Aut humana parum cavit natura.”

The modern critic pays no attention to such “notions,” he looks in too many cases to the copyright interest. He is over-nice where the fault is not of moment, if praise or censure be an indifferent matter showing that with little learning he is one who, without entering into the soul of an author, keeps a few genera

rules like mechanical instruments, which he applies to the writer, and as he quadrates with him, pronounces the work defective or otherwise. I must allude to another branch of this subject, because I have seen so much of the ill treatment of persons whose talents were considerable, and whose works merited indulgence, by those who conducted critical publications, the proprietors of which were dealers in books, but who, in the cases to which I allude, had no money interest in the publications censured. The error of the hypercritic fades before the unmerited treatment from critics who are influenced, or moved by the indifference arising out of the want of interest in the pecuniary profit of the publication. To this indifference it becomes a scapegoat. The condemnation is made proof of independence in critical judgment. Thus one work becomes the victim of the false praises of other works in which the critics own proprietary has an interest. A treatise on the venality of criticism remains to be written. I wish some penitent soul who has been behind the scenes, during the last thirty or forty years, would undertake a task which would surprise, and not a little amuse the world. I have seen more of this influence than I can afford to consume space in relating, from its organization to the period when the public became so sensible of the abuse as no longer to suffer itself to be imposed upon as it was before. Common discretion was outraged by cupidity, and honest authorship brought into contempt. I can truly say that in the works of which I have had the superintendence, I never betrayed the interests of literature in this way. I regret it was but too seldom my power was absolute enough wholly to prevent it,

but I often did prevent it. It is the curse of literature that a writer's thoughts are subjected to an enormous pecuniary burthen before they can make their appeal to the judgment of those competent to decide upon their merits, and are thus burthened in their issue. The monied interest corrupts our literature as well as our morals. Nothing can be more at variance than the true use of the press and the spirit of sordid lucre, to which the most enobling ideas must bend. To efforts of the same nature is to be ascribed the declension of poetry. There is a portion of its first principles to be traced in novels, as far as the departments of invention and imagination are concerned. Narrative, very like prose, was the earliest species of poetry, it being but a recitation of deeds having no expression of feeling. Poetry is not relished by "the general," especially if it be of a superior character, and it was never a favourite with the trader in consequence. But in one or two classes of works of fiction, we have still the elements of poetry kept alive. I have said primarily poetry was the recitation of deeds, not the expression of feeling. It is probable that music supplied this expression at first, and next became capable of being separated from it, and standing an art by itself. The demand then commenced both upon the feeling and imagination. An obedience to mere external truth is the character of narrative, which thus became partially relinquished for the cultivation of another species of truth, that of feeling. The mind looked not alone at outward forms or facts, but as well at those inward feelings which are really true. Then art began to appear, because in mere poetical narration there was no individual character, it

consisted of living national recollections alone. It had no artists. Works of fiction, therefore, will keep a great constituent of genuine poetry alive, and tend to its resuscitation in the public regard. The undying strains of true poetry will be again awakened, and our greater poets be felt and understood. It cannot die out of men's souls if little felt when capricious fashion rules. It has its germ in the human heart, in the spirits of generous youth, being inerasable from the tablet of our nature. Its simple and sober character may not harmonize with an age when mere novelty is the order of the time, the love of which has been nursed and cockered by every unworthy and pernicious art. Thus detrimental is the abandonment of good taste in an age that hunts out wonders, and seeks in its pursuits not reason, but idle resources for a remedy against weariness, not to enlarge the mind. "The public must have something spasmodic," said a bibliopolist the other day. No doubt this is true, but the supply will fall short. American conjurers and Tom Thumbs must be presented in suecession to gratify an advanced age. The most fertile invention cannot long feed the appetite of those who crave for such food, and hence comes the hope of a change.

In regard, therefore, to profit from authorship, I found that it was more safe and advantageous to write for existing works, than to bring out works on my own account. In the one case, all was under my own control; on the other, nothing felt but onerous labour, vexation, and indirect dealing. The project of a really good work, that forty years ago would have been grasped at by the leading houses in London, would now have no

chance, the object being to make the public awake to a name, sell off an edition, and have done with it. The way of doing business among the old book-selling firms was rational and considerate. There was a friendship between the author and his publisher, which has disappeared, literary bargaining being as much of a huckstering affair as a purchase in Clare Market. The old houses of Longman and Co., Murray, Whittaker, and others, on my first coming to town, surprised me by their urbanity, and the opportunities given at set seasons for the facility of intercourse and business. Their heads have long ago disappeared. On such occasions, the authors of that time were certain to meet with friendliness, and the conversation was useful and improving. I do not now recognise a solitary individual left belonging to those times. They have disappeared from the scene, with some to whose attentions they were indebted for improving and harmonizing meetings and pleasant sociality—but enough.

Among the non-literary characters whom I know recently deceased, was Mr. William Holmes, a much-abused man by many, but, in truth, one most honourable for his consistency in politics. A Tory, he held his course consistently to the last, always kind and courteous, the best manager of the House of Commons before the Reform Bill, that the country ever saw. His first return for Sligo was by a mere accident. He made no flaming pretensions—he was no orator—but he soon found out how to manage the House for the advantage of his party. He was not long in discovering the tendencies of the members of a tolerably venal House of Commons, of which it suffices to say Lord Castlereagh

was the leader. Mr. Holmes seemed to know every collateral relationship in blood and politics of those he had to whip up. He had the spirit to resign the treasurership of the ordnance, though he was not bound to do so, and to quit place when the Duke of Wellington vacated office, and yet he was not a man of fortune. I always found him, though differing in politics, a good-natured man, of talents peculiarly fitted for the office he undertook, and, I believe, that in every relation in life, without great abilities, he was strictly honourable.

I had thought of a history of the Duchy of Cornwall, beginning with its institution under Edward III., when Fowey, one of its towns, sent more ships to the king for the siege of Calais, than any other place in the kingdom. Down to the reign of Henry VIII., I found the duchy consisted of ten castles, nine parks, fifty-three manors, thirteen towns and large tracts of land. At the accession of the house of Hanover, it had been greatly diminished, principally from the Stuart family, converting the property to their own use. The Stannary Laws, the geological, mineralogical, commercial, and agricultural relations of the duchy, and all its statistics, would have been comprehensively treated. On making application to the proper authorities for leave to examine certain documents, the property of the trustees of the dukedom, I was informed that there were disputes pending in relation to certain properties, which it would be inconvenient just then to make known. Without information afforded from the documents, for which I applied, I could not proceed satisfactorily. The precise reasons were explained to me, and I fully admitted their justice. Unfortunately, though the objection was but temporary,

yet, being of uncertain duration, it necessarily caused the abandonment of the design.

In actively aiding my plan for the foregoing history, I cannot overlook the kindness of one of the most gentlemanly and amiable men I ever knew. I was indebted to him for an introduction to the duchy officers. During an intercourse of twenty years, I found in him ever the same urbanity, the same kind nature. I refer to Major General Anson, lately cut off so unexpectedly, at a critical moment, in India, when commander-in-chief of the army in that country, and moving down upon Delhi, to suppress the mutiny there. With great equanimity of temper, and gentle, manly feeling, upon all occasions, and a bearing which generated regard from every rank of persons, he possessed sound judgment, excellent qualifications for business, and a power in public speaking which would have well marked him in the House of Commons, had he duly cultivated his talents. I have heard him speak in public with a fluency and self-possession, a manly exposition of principles, and a discrimination that would have done honour to names distinguished for forensic ability. When clerk of the ordnance, he was most attentive to his official duties. He was a cool, courageous man, and brought a sound judgment to bear upon all questions. He was attacked by cholera at the moment when I am persuaded the exertion of his judgment and good sense would have rendered eminent services to his country. When a young man, for he was about sixty years old at the time of his decease, he was known in town as "le beau colonel," and was a great favourite with the fair sex. As an individual connected with a family of distinction, and name in

British history, General Anson passed through life with the love of his kind of all degrees, but by none more deeply regarded than by the writer of this short mention of an intercourse which is deeply engraved in regretful characters upon his memory.

Another of those vacancies in the social circle of which we are destined to encounter so many as we advance in life, occurred in the circle of my friends, by the death of Sir George Magrath, at Plymouth, whom I have before mentioned, and an account of whose death reached me unexpectedly. He was at a very advanced age, as may be gathered from his having been the medical officer of Nelson, at the battle of Copenhagen. He was with the hero of the Nile also off Toulon, when the French fleet slipped out, and was followed by Nelson to the West Indies. On passing the Straits of Gibraltar, the fever raging there at the time, Nelson said, "Magrath, they seem not to know what they are about, they are panic-struck; go on shore, and take the naval hospital in hand, and clear it." Magrath was left accordingly. The late Sir William Beatty being his *locum tenens*. Magrath had no opportunity of rejoining Nelson, and missed being in the battle of Trafalgar. Sir George was afterwards appointed chief medical officer to the prisoners of war at Plymouth. We lived near each other, and were both members of the beefsteak club. He had a pension for the loss of an eye, in the performance of his duties. After the peace of 1815, he commenced private practice. We had many conversations about Nelson, in all which, except this great man's conduct in the Bay of Naples, he extolled him in the highest terms. Regarding Naples, Magrath would

say, "Let us not speak of that, he was not the first man infatuated by a petticoat, and will not be the last." I remember I once asked him regarding Nelson's self-possession, and he replied, in action, it was perfect, and even in sudden surprises, but that, in moments of anxiety or uncertainty, he would beat his side with the stump of his severed arm, as if impatient. "Does old Brontè shake his stump this morning?" used to be a question from one officer to another, who had gone below. Off Toulon, Nelson, with three or four ships only, determined to look into Toulon, and bore up accordingly, without suspicion of what occurred. The rest of the fleet was hull down. To the hero's astonishment, he found the whole French force with their sails loosened to come out. There was no choice but to get away as fast as possible. Unluckily, some of the ships with him were the worst sailers in the fleet. He ordered sail to be slackened in his own ship, that he might be the rear-most himself, and the others carry a press of canvass. Most anxiously he marked the speed of his own bad sailers increase their distance, and then turned to look at the enemy, who came out in succession, "old Brontè," as his anxiety increased, shaking his stump furiously, and muttering, "They shan't take us—they shan't take us!" It was a most interesting moment to all. The French came on in pursuit, until nearly within gun shot, when they tacked, and stood back again, to the relief of all on board, as well as of Nelson's mutilated limb. The French were probably deterred from attacking by the greatness of his name. Had they done so, they must have captured, or sank him, and the day of Trafalgar would never have occurred. At another time,

on the quarter-deck, chatting with his officers, a flame suddenly sprung up the hatchway, several feet above the deck. Many of the men, alarmed, ran into the chains, fearing the ship would blow up, and two or three jumped into the sea. Nelson calmly said, "Hardy, go below and see what is the matter." He then cast an angry look at the more timid men. Magrath quieted the alarm by stating that he had given a vessel of ether to one of the mates to decant. That he had cautioned him about suffering a candle near, and, no doubt, that caution had been neglected. So it proved, and the flame was soon extinguished with wet blankets. What was singular, the men who sprang overboard were ever after regarded by Nelson with great distaste. He rarely noticed them again, though he would often address others of the crew, when on duty near him; the truth was, he could not forgive the display they made of their apprehensions. It is probable Magrath was the last officer surviving, above the rank of midshipman, who sailed with Nelson. He was a very firm man; when any of the wounded prisoners would object to amputation, or to some severe operation, and declare they would rather die, he would give them an hour or two to consider, telling them he would call in the guard, and perform the operation by force, for it was his duty to save their lives, if he could. After they became convalescent, they used to exhibit to him the most unbounded gratitude. Horrible, I remember, were some of the exhibitions of human suffering shown at these times.

Admiring the beautiful view from the citadel flag-staff, at Plymouth, Magrath and myself used to contrast

it with Hyde Park, remarking on the want of similar scenes in London. Since then we have seen the Regent's, Victoria, and Battersea Parks laid out. Before that, we could make little more boast than Paris and Berlin. Hyde Park is inferior to the Prater at Vienna, but Kensington Gardens outvie the Augarten at Vienna, and the Schlossgarten at Dresden. The Prater has the magnificent Danube rolling along its noble waters, neither stained with offensive mud, nor seeming as sluggish as the dirty Thames. Then the magnificent carriage promenade, under double rows of lofty trees, and the walks on the sward, and among clumps of fine oaks, render the Prater most attractive. There is more freedom in the irregularity of the English visitants to the parks in London. The promenaders at Vienna go at a fixed hour, as if they were commanded by the police to take their pleasure only at an appointed time from a higher authority. The truth is, that the heavy Austrian borrowed the custom from the Italians, among whom it arises from a want of variety in their pleasures, a dearth of resources. Thus, pleasure is made a sort of duty, and dissipation put upon the same footing as business. Time is expended with as much attention to method, when wasted, as when employed. The plodding Germans do not forget to have houses of refreshment on all sides whence music resounds; while dancers are seen executing their steps with great gravity, just as if they were balancing a score with conscience before a priest. All is sensation, not animation. The bourgeois go with their families to eat and feast. The return home in the evening is an agreeable sight, a quiet march of family upon family, all passing in one direction. The

distance from the Prater is but a mile and a half, from whence nothing of the city is seen but the crooked spire of St. Stephen. The long train plods on, for the bourgeois German never steps out, nor runs, he only plods, wending his way with none of the noisiness of the citizens of London and Paris. There is music on every side to supply his vacuity of thought. The royal family is levelled with the populace, exercising its ceremonial rights only when fulfilling its duties—a humiliating contrast to the stiffness and formality in our country, which boasts of freedom and exhibits servility and gross ill manners, wherever royalty appears. I have observed the French, on such occasions, to be far more enjoying than the Germans or English. I ever had a pleasure in seeing that of my fellow citizens; but, I must confess, that, in England, it is almost always mixed with roughness, coarse manners, and even inebriation. In some of the old towns of France, the glacis of the abandoned works of defence is planted with trees; and, at the summer evening dances there, people of all ranks intermingle. The good-humour always prevalent, gave me a more pleasing impress of popular enjoyment than I ever felt in an English or German assemblage.

There was no great change in the mode of London pleasure-taking in my time, till the conveyance by steam. This mostly conveys the citizen to some former haunt. He flattens his nose, as before, on the window, and thinks idleness is pleasure-taking. The tea-garden of smaller proportion, and the Sunday drive into the country to a numerical extent, commensurate with the increase of the metropolitan population, are much as before. It is true, White Conduit-House, Vauxhall,

Hornsey, and places now forgotten, were the former haunts of the citizens, among whom, when I first knew London, ebriety was a much more besetting sin than at present. Vauxhall was then select as to company, and expensive in cost, if supper were taken ; but its glories are gone, as well as its adornments by Hogarth. Ranelagh was closed before I arrived in town. I remember hearing of a grand fête given there some years before. The rotunda was a hundred and fifty feet in diameter, and the company promenaded round an orchestra in the centre. At an entertainment called the knight's gala, given there to two thousand persons, the cherries cost a guinea a pound, and the green peas fourteen shillings per quart. Seven thousand pounds were expended, and the company came in court dresses. At one of the fêtes at that place, given by a foreign ambassador, all the old Pantheon of gods and goddesses was introduced. At another to Queen Charlotte, Ranelagh represented a Spanish camp, with tents, and a boy in uniform placed at every tent entrance. A pavilion of white satin, gold-fringed, received the queen and princesses. Dancers exhibited with castanets ; the female waiters were all dressed as shepherdesses, crowned with garlands. A hundred valets, in scarlet, the seams of their coats embroidered with gold lace, and with waistcoats of blue and gold, attended upon the company. A hundred footmen, in sky-blue coats and silver lace, and waistcoats of blue and silver, waited upon the valets. Such was the statement of one who was present at the entertainment, which would, as far as concerned its regulations and fashions, be thought very incongruous now. As I paced the old rotunda ground, in the heyday of youth, I

thought of the glories of the scenes that had occurred there, and envied those who had shared in them. The last time, some years ago, I looked for the old spot, and I could not trace it. We have certainly improved our taste in this species of pleasure.

I had been threatened with an action at law, but it, fortunately, came to nothing. I had affidavits to make, notwithstanding, which, I was told, were only a mere form. I had my doubts whether I dared to swear them, though perfectly regarded as in the due course of things. There was always something frightful to my mind in law-swearing. It is to be lamented that law and divinity love a little deviation from truth, as a sort of relish, I presume, for too much of truth in other parts of the profession. The two most important things to social comfort and happiness, are conspicuous for fictions so clumsy, or rather, so bare-faced, that no fifth-rate novelist could venture upon them in a fancy tale. Law fictions have been notoriously displayed by Bentham. If objected to, "O, it is only a form," is the reply. Yet the law punishes perjury, but not its own perjuries, they are always right. The worst, I believe, is that they are paying perjuries. The moral perjuries, too, forced to be committed, are needless and voluminous. Take the church services, and compare the words and averments with its exactions—the facts with the falsehoods forced to be uttered. Take the marriage ceremony, so continually a legalized falsification. The averment of the love commanded between man and wife, as necessary to the service, and to lawful matrimony, and the bride led to the ceremony in tears by avaricious parents. Let the

inveigling matrimonial system be contrasted with the real thing. Surely, some simple form would be better even for those who credit the service as a holy sacrament, than to adopt falsehoods under the plea of custom, because many are reluctant to be married out of church, and those who bargain away their children, are not nice about words. I have known a girl forced to a marriage with disgraceful threatenings, and a son, to save the fortunes of his family, united to age and ugliness, both with the words: "Be ye well assured, that as many as are coupled together otherwise than as God's word doth allow, are not joined together by God, *neither is their matrimony lawful!*" I have very heterodox notions about these things.

Southey's death removed another name from our literature, familiar to my earlier years, but the last of his life was melancholy from a state of fatuity. In private life he was amiable, I take it with somewhat of coldness in temperament. As a poet, he can claim no high place. In literature, he was laborious, in "all work," and an advocate of opposite principles at different times, now dreaming of republics in aboriginal forests, and writing in the extreme republican fashion, and then turning round to high church and state doctrines, and taking the laureateship from a regal in place of a republican ruler. Setting out in life, as the champion of peace and freedom, and closing his career, as long as he was master of his faculties, with defending absolutism, monopoly, wasteful wars, and religious bigotry. As the slave become master, changes to the severest of tyrants, the most loose in early political principle become the most relentless of persecutors. So

far did he carry his political animosity, that he became utterly insensible to ridicule. His "Vision of Judgment," was the most ridiculous effusion of a perverted taste ever written. Its greatest praise was that it gave rise to the best satire by Lord Byron, that had been written for a long time. As a second rate poet, his works may be read with the acknowledgment that some are agreeable and kindly. His prose works in style are good, but not always regardful of facts. His book of the church was a trumpet of bigotry. The "Quarterly Review" became a great receptacle of his outpourings, and showed the bitterness of his spirit against all who differed from him in faith or politics.

As soon as he heard of Byron's death, he wrote a letter which displayed the mind of an inquisitor, with the spirit that kindled Smithfield fires. He knew that the scourge applied to his back in the parody on his "Vision of Judgment," his poem worthy of his laureateship, could not again be uplifted. He was in reality a weak-minded man. His leap from philanthropy to religious and political bitterness of soul, from sectarian doctrines, to high church creeds, from toleration to all but persecution, show that honest pride of principle never inhabited his breast. He who had declared his sympathy for Martin, the regicide, expressed a similar attachment for the mental hallucinations of George the Third.

There was no christianity out of the English Church, and no perfection in rule, but it was to be found in the most arbitrary notion of the English constitution. I knew but little of him personally. I never liked him because he hated all who differed from him, whether in politics, faith, or anything else; and though he lived to see his

political predictions, and religious anathemas fifty-fold falsified, the evidence of his senses failed to make him soften a sentence, or retract an error. I read his poems as they appeared, and they afforded entertainment at an age when we do not much trouble ourselves about the writers or their works, not being critical, or over-nice about the cook, if the dishes fit our taste. I did not like his physiognomy. There was something about it that seemed as if it covered much the observer would desire to see laid open, and yet his features were good. In the two or three times I met him, I had no opportunity of forming a judgment from anything he said. He had nothing striking about him. In some observations he made to Murray, the bookseller, commenting on an article in the "Quarterly Journal of Science," he said, that the arcana of magnetism was new to him, he had never been called upon to say anything about it. By this I imagined, I hardly knew why, that he made a chance selection of subjects for his pen, and then read for the information he required, without having previously even an elementary acquaintance with it. His industry was unflagging, and greatly superior to his ability.

I was introduced, by an old friend, to the well-known editor of the Dublin "Morning Post," Mr. Conway, who died in that city at a very advanced age. He was a friendly man, and in his capacity as editor, the best in all Ireland. He rendered great aid to the cause of Catholic Emancipation; and he understood the Irish people well, together with their grievances. He was a man of varied knowledge, and was considered the only editor of an Irish paper at that time, who could off-hand freely discuss the questions of the currency, corn laws, and

political economy in general. He told me, to my astonishment, that he was the only private individual in Dublin who possessed anything worthy of being called a library.

His paper was once edited by John Magee, the younger, who used to have many a singular dialogue with John Scott, Lord Clonmell, when presiding as Chief Justice in Ireland. In defending himself, Magee would allude to some public character by a familiar designation, and the judge would reprove him. "Mr. Magee, no nick-names in this court." Magee would reply, "Very well, *John Scott* !"

Jonah Barrington has related many anecdotes of the elder Magee in his diverting Memoirs. If Sir Jonah romanced occasionally, his romances were diverting. I met him several times in company, but he was by no means as entertaining with his tongue as with his pen, or else I found him in no happy humour. The last time I saw him, he was in company with a daughter, who, I believe, accompanied him to Paris. His pictures of Irish society, so amusing in themselves, do not say much for the state of morals in the island, at the period he describes. It was in vain to reason against the errors of such a view, because reason is unable to cope with deep-rooted follies, to which, all who treat common sense with contempt, have a wonderful attachment. The affection of many men for nonsense, is too natural to be overcome.

Wishing to produce a work that might be of use to the public service, in consequence of the smattering of naval affairs which I had acquired in my youth, and impelled by the consciousness that I could achieve an

object of considerable utility by the publication of a geographical work of reference for naval men, I took a short time to consider the subject, and determined to make the attempt. Mentioning my design to several who understood the subject, they highly approved of it. From a work somewhat similar, which went through two editions, about the year 1802, embellished with charts, I had thus ground to hope that in these days a work of the kind, superior to the miserable undertaking to which I allude, would not fail to find encouragement. In this I relied on the opinion of able judges, and nothing disproved it.

The work was large and expensive, one of those designed for all time, every edition being rendered more perfect by fresh discoveries and corrections. In fact, such a work, if it included sailing directions, which would quadruple its extent, would be invaluable in the navy. With the "directions" it would become a national work; it should be executed by the government. For nearly two years I pored over charts and voyages, collecting the materials for the North Atlantic. The work was a species of gazetteer of the ocean. It had reference to the ports, havens, creeks, rocks, shoals, currents, sands, *vigiæ*, harbours, roadsteads, capes, banks, and similar *minutiæ*, classed under the several oceans or seas. The latitudes and longitudes, soundings in fathoms, lights, anchorages, bearings and the like to be alphabetically arranged. I had the best assistance from the Admiralty. The hydrographical office was made accessible to me, where, under the superintendence of Admiral Beaufort, one of the most able naval officers ever at the head of any department of the public ser-

vice, a mass of information was continually adding to the stores already accumulated, quite astounding in magnitude, but all necessary to the welfare of the navy, without which, silently and unostentatiously as the business proceeds, navigation itself would encounter difficulties and hazards beyond conception.

The labour, which was great, did not appal me. When the sheets were set up, they were submitted to the inspection of a highly qualified master in the navy, in order to guard against error as much as possible. About two hundred pages of the North Atlantic were beautifully printed by Harrison and Son of St. Martin's Lane. Here the printing terminated, but a considerable portion of the manuscript was completed satisfactorily.

The booksellers, who now look only to printing an edition of an amusing work, and getting their money back as soon as possible, will no longer undertake works about which there was no difficulty as to the publication in times past, when the modern sources of information did not exist. The plea of utility will not do against a quick money return, and thus one of the most laborious and useful works rests in abeyance, in the period of a supposed advance in minds directed to research, and to those higher undertakings of a literary nature, which should belong to the present rather than to the past time. Then the spirit for acquiring such works did exist, but deficient of the information which is at present in our possession.

The tables are thus turned. It is sufficiently painful to find the waste of labour and money upon a work of great acknowledged utility, and still more so to

discover the cause in the neglect of the public towards high and useful literary undertakings. It is fortunate for the preservation of laborious and curious works, that they are now prevented from being lost by private societies which are formed for reprinting them. That the booksellers would do this there is little doubt, if it would pay them, and the lesson thus taught in the diminution of the numbers of those who read the best works of our departed authors is painful enough. We may soon expect that our Johnsons and Beaumonts, our Miltons and Lockes will become reprints alone through private societies, and that Shakespeare will only escape a similar fate by the fashion that makes hundreds breathe his name, and buy his works, who have no comprehension of his excellencies.*

* The under valuation of the branches of the public service in the navy connected with science, is a part of the inheritance of a barbarous feudal ancestry engrafted on modern aristocracy. In 1848 the sum of £7,726,610 was voted for the Navy. The Hydrographical Office with all its vast and laborious returns, cost about twenty-eight thousand pounds out of so many millions. Yet upon this office depends the safety of all our vessels. The distinguished officer then at its head, Admiral Beaufort, had five hundred a-year, an individual whose name is deep in the minds of scientific men, in every civilized country. This zealous and highly-gifted officer on whom so much depended, had a salary no higher than our dockyard surgeons, store-keepers, and harbour-masters! It is a peculiarity in the public service of England alone, in all its departments, and it is painful to contemplate, that in proportion to the labour of mind, and the difficulty and rarity of high intellectual attainments, the remuneration for the service is estimated less than for those which are common-place. To this, perhaps, it is owing that the French and Spaniards build better sailing vessels than we do: they compensate proportionably to their value the sciences that can alone lead to perfect construction. Nothing is so easy as to rule a kingdom; can it be that those who rule us try mind by their own measure, and as they cannot comprehend the value of high intellect, they pay by their own judgment of its worth—*ex nihilo, nihil fit*.

I circulated privately, at that time, some remarks on the invasion mania, too often prevalent. The French were going to run across the Channel with fifty thousand men some dark night, in fifty steamers, and to eat us all up! On the French side there would be no movings down to the coast, no accumulations of stores, no declaration of war, but they were to come over without, and in the teeth of such a danger we were sending away troops. The same croaking of the papers took place when we sent troops to India. Our navy was put out of sight that had so often prevented an invasion, and now with steam so much better able to defend us. I copy my words in 1848:—

“Let us suppose the effective blockade of Cherbourg, Havre, or Brest, in place of being more practicable than ever, utterly neglected. I mention these ports because they are the only ports the French possess in the Channel from one of which such an expedition could sail. Suppose the point of attack to be somewhere between Portland Roads and Dungeness, say Brighton. We might have a few steamers in Portland Roads, more at Portsmouth, and a dozen in East or West Road, Dungeness. I put an imaginary case. The enemy is in sight off Brighton. The electric telegraph, in five minutes, communicates the intelligence to the Admiralty; the Admiralty, in five minutes more, orders the squadron in Portland Roads to steam to the eastward; the Portsmouth to do the same; to which last force that of Portland would be a reserve. There would be no delay. In an hour both squadrons would be steaming up Channel; and the headmost off Brighton in three or four hours more, shaking the Frenchmen's nerves before their troops were half landed. The eastern squadron, going west, would steam in sight at the same time round Beachy Head, and join the Portsmouth seawards. The soldiers still on board the French vessels would share a fate, which it is not difficult to predict. Suppose the attack more westwards, we have Falmouth and Plymouth to double upon Portland from the west; Portsmouth and Dungeness from the east, should the attack be on Portland. I put these cases merely to show how a system of steam defence may contribute to our insular security far beyond that which is confined to vessels dependent on the winds and waves, or on blockade; and yet the latter system alone sufficed to prevent a far more formidable foe from crossing the Channel, with larger means than centuries are likely to show the world again. So far then is steam from increasing the facility of invasion without vastly increasing the means of defence, that it does directly the reverse, under the most adverse aspect. But the French are too sagacious to

fling away troops and vessels in such a manner. The truth is, there is an itch in the profession for an increase of the Army, which must have full credit for its services; but as it never yet saved this country from the foot of a foe, it would be singular indeed if means of defence the most superior that could be devised, in addition to what we already possess—means actually innate—could by any but the most inveterate perversion of reason and fact, be tortured into a plea for a reverse conclusion, and for confiding our defence to a new arm. The army has ever been an aggressive force: the navy is defensive, and has again and again preserved this country from invasion, when the seaman's movements were not, as they now are, dependant upon his own volition. So far from the strength of France being increased by the invention, it is the reverse. We have many times over her number of seamen, we have already many times her number of steamers, better and larger, we are better makers and managers of machinery, although the French build better sailing vessels than we do, our stock of iron and coal is inexhaustible, our division of labour enables us to work better and cheaper in complex machinery. It is, therefore, demerit in any to affirm we are in the slightest danger from France with common caution. When we began the war of 1793, France had excellent seamen and eighty ships of the line; Spain seventy-six. Our naval expenses did not average but about four and a half millions each year; yet by the close of the eighteenth century, France had lost all her prime seamen; the fleets of Trafalgar both French and Spanish were manned by few real seamen, and for the most part by landsmen, disciplined in harbour. France cannot send forty sail of the line to sea now, Spain not ten. We can send twice the number of the two naval states once so powerful. Indeed it seems rather worthy of inquiry why we keep up such a gigantic force of large ships at so great an expense as we do. It will take generations to make France and Spain what they once were at sea. They may build ships, England and America alone can man fleets; commerce is the sole creator of a war navy. We captured from France and Spain last war, a larger navy than our own, one hundred and fifty-six sail of the line, three hundred and eighty-two frigates, and six hundred and sixty-two smaller vessels,—can anything more be wanting to silence by fact the unreflecting creatures that thus alarm a community which never reasons except upon homespun affairs, and is content to take everything else for gospel, upon the first hearsay, or out of newspapers."

I have thus repeated myself to a few, though not to the public. I observed that people did not look closely into facts. Too often, if a writer can make a sensation, well or ill founded, his end is answered. Never was there so little exercise of an individual's own judgment upon public affairs by an attention to facts alone as at the present time. Men do not appear to have leisure for thinking beyond the rule of multiplication in money accounts.

When Wordsworth died there was a contest about his merits as a poet. I got into a contention on the subject. It cannot be denied that the projector of a new scheme for poetical writing, not to be challenged, merits especial notice, for with Wordsworth all was *ex cathedra*. His lyrical ballads I read on their first appearance, with a perfect ignorance of what end their author could have in view, except to strip poetry of all that is attractive, and send her a doggrel ballad singer *en chemise* through the world. Dogmatic, haughty, and self-sufficient, there was nothing of soul-kindliness in Wordsworth, and a poet without a heart is a non-descript creature. He had no relish for Shakspeare, and affected an abstractedness, which he imagined, or his friends for him, was a communing with the black or grey spirits of the Cumberland mountains. When the 'Excursion' appeared, a friend who admired the poem lent it to me. It was with difficulty I waded through it. That there were fine lines here and there is admitted, but it is too much to have to grope through a bushel of chaff to find a grain or two of wheat. Wordsworth was a man who, I hope, only affected a sort of ascetism in order to cultivate solitariness, and obtain credit for profundity or rather obscurity. He would fain be oracular and austere as well, in order to be taken for a second, and no doubt in his own opinion an improved Milton. Yet so far from being worthy of the comparison, he endeavoured to frame a new poetical system which he notoriously violated in nearly all he wrote, but which some friends extolled in the face of his violations. All phrases and forms were to be rejected that were not included in the language of common life. He

would degrade all to the humblest language of the reality, that was his law. He would give nothing of the gratification which fancy proffers. He asserted, too, that the language of poetry should be that of prose, and that fact or imagination were the same. It must be confessed his language is sufficiently prosaic. Though convinced by his own example of the impracticability of his theory, he advocated it as strenuously as ever. All the poetry of England, with one or two reluctant exceptions, were beneath his lofty endurance. He affected an equal regard and interest for the meanest as for the grandest objects, an error self-evident. Vain and egotistical, destitute of genial feeling, intellectual in his own way, he moves no passion, raises no heart-warmth, excites no sympathy, works upon nature, and nature alone, but does not depict nature in her glories. Talfourd, in our early acquaintance, extolled Wordsworth enthusiastically.

"How wonderful—how sublime," said he, "is that verse :

‘ Along the line of limitless desires.’ ”

"I cannot see it," I replied. "It is true the obscure is one of the sources of the sublime."

"You can't see it?"

"I can't indeed."

"Then you have not learned Wordsworth."

"I am afraid I am but a dull scholar. Is it worth while learning a new language to comprehend a solitary beauty or two? He does not want able advocates."

Talfourd would not forgive my heretical opinions about the poet of the Lakes, but I fancied that some years afterwards he became much less enthusiastic about him.

Wordsworth was not, in strictness, more than an illustrator of nature according to his own peculiar view. He drew from observation certain points which struck him, and he dressed them up in a garb accordant with his own arid language under peculiar tendencies. With him nature was treated the same in everything, in the face of her infinite variety of aspect, and in all her moods. He was the hero of his own solitude, discoursing with himself. He expected the thinking world to abandon its habits and predispositions, even the use of its visual organs, to see through his telescope, adopt his ideas, and be grateful for the boon he bestowed. It would not agree to this, and then Wordsworth was a disappointed man. The solitary discoursing with himself records nothing of the affections which belong to the great family of humanity, but bids us admire what affects himself, no matter how much out of the common course of our judgment. We must take that which he incontinently pours forth for the best of all possible things, because it is his—Wordsworth's—and because so few poets rank before himself. Others must feel, not as nature dictates, not as Shakspeare exhibits nature in herself faithfully and truly, but as Wordsworth's optics exhibit her. We must feel the force of his descriptions, and learn how, let the theme be low or lofty. He asks nothing, and affects to give nothing derived from external pomp, and that which the world calls 'great;' taking no bias from received opinions, which he rightly felt are as often false as true. He is proud of showing that in his own view the vulgarest things are really great and interesting; rendered vulgar by habit, but in reality equal to the highest

in merit which he is happy to draw out to the light of day, or to elevate by association. To repeat it once more—with him all past ideas in poetry are to be discarded—all inherited predilections, all learning, all the predispositions, and vested rights, and pomp and circumstance inherent in it through bygone days. The culture of his school is to commence anew from the root of the poetic art. A beaker must be swallowed of the water of Lethe in regard to all but his theory, and there must be a hecatomb of the poets of all ages, offered up by his disciples, out of the ashes of which is to rise the true verse—the enduring perfect edifice of plain Tuscan, made consentaneous with existing things. No graceful foliage is to decorate the capitals of his columns, not a fluting nor a volute; in other words, of the five orders, four are to be rejected for their refinement's sake. He will have nothing but himself. All must flow from his own dictation; and when the subject is unworthy of his own genius, he will raise it to the common level; but this must be in his own mode alone. Thus any subject within the scope of observation may be rendered fit for the object intended. Thus the poor soil may be rendered fruitful, and the Saharan desert bear wholesome vegetation. But there is to be no aggrandisement, no accommodating the shows of things to elevated ideas. The roses of Pæstum are not to breathe more fragrance than the dog-rose, nor are the eyes of the lover's mistress to be more bright and beaming in verse than in reality. The 'line' chosen by the poet is, of course, in his own taste, and would not be questioned, but that he would have it be the law for others. It was this spirit, generated by

dogmatical wounded pride, and the feeling—though he was sustained by more friends in the press, acting continually upon the public mind in his behalf, than any poet ever was before—that he was not where his ambition placed him: it was this spirit which probably carried him farther than he would otherwise have gone in upholding the rules he laid down for poetry. These rules were not assented to by his literary friends. Coleridge left a record of his difference of opinion about them. Southey declared openly that they were erroneous. Those opponent opinions, and the failure of ‘The Excursion,’ seem to have made the poet resile upon himself; cherish the solitary reveries that strengthened his value of the system, out of the idea that his views were undervalued in their merits; not considering the gigantic character of the change he was attempting to effect. He imagined, too, that the general heart beat responsive to his own, while in the existing artificial state of society the minds of men have become less responsive to new systems, and even to old truths. The wild rock, the rugged glen, the misty mountain, the aërial lark, the seasons, the shattered oak, the wild down, the ragged beggar, the storm and its ravage, down to the very weed which grows beneath the mouldering wall—all these, however interesting and valued by the poet, are disdained by the world of bustle and contention. It can see nothing in such objects—they are ‘foolishness to the Greek.’ It is among those alone who dwell in the bosom of nature, who live as Wordsworth lived, and think and feel as he thought and felt, that he can be duly estimated, let others pretend or affect to understand him as they may.

Wordsworth can never be a popular poet. He possesses none of the attraction upon which popularity is founded. He is too plain, tedious, and unexciting, or else too deep and philosophic. In the first case, he will fail to excite interest in his readers, and in the other he will be comprehended by a comparative few, who cannot relish that from which real lovers of nature, as she is treated by Shakspeare and almost all other poets, feel gratification. We have had an example of the fate of metaphysical poetry long ago, perhaps that of a self-lauded style with a heartless pen may not in the end be very dissimilar. It is essential to the poet to have a sympathy with something more in the world than stocks and stones, and till now it became poets to have a heart to animate affection, elevate the view, and show humility in their own regard. Wordsworth has had no poetical brotherhood.

What mistakes are made in theories like Wordsworth's, and so too about that word wisdom, a vain thing, applied to rectifying commas, and wasting reams of paper to settle the question of a digamma. The depth of thought, the beauty, the main object of a writer are the last things noticed by men given to this laborious trifling. They who would carry out new theories continually deceive themselves. If such men ever deviate from their beaten track, it is only to inculcate some musty axiom as far from truth as reason. Such persons are Ephraim Jenkinsons. One of them, who has been reading folios of commentaries up to eighty years of age, says with great gravity, as a novelty, "the world is in its dotage, and the cosmogony has puzzled the learned of every age. What a medley of opinions

have they broached upon the creation of the world. Sanconiathon, Manetho, Berosus, and Ocellus Lucanus, all have attempted it in vain ; but, sir, I think—" Now when a scholar begins in this way, I assure myself it is no other than Goldsmith's Ephraim Jenkinson, who wants to buy my horse, or sell me a pair of green spectacles. The learned of this class descend nearly to the level of those who make coin accumulation the summum bonum. With these too, the pursuit goes on to the last, and they view, with satisfaction, the stock of useless learning they have acquired. Fame, glory, virtue, shed no more consolation around their dying heads than the gold man finds around his, who expires with the query of the price of consols on his tongue. It is true that they do not outrage the decencies of life for self interest, that they are not hypocrites, and that they have no reason to suppose St. Peter will close the gates of Heaven against them if in other respect worthy, while the fate of a Dives is more clear against him than against those who have spent life in trifling, if it has been laborious.

The vanity of learning is as light as any other species, although it be innocent. Its assumption by those who are ignorant always betrays itself, as the Scotch woman betrayed her husband, when she told her companion that he had travelled over the whole world—had seen Babylon and the Garden of Eden where Paradise was.

"And what did he see there—the tree of life, I suppose, and the like of that?"

"Not a tree for a walking stick, all the garden was gone to ruin, no shrubs, nor flowers, not even a cabbage stump—nothing was left but a few gooseberry bushes."

No doubt this was satisfactory to the enquirer. There is a pleasure in ignorance ; where little is known, it requires so much less knowledge to be happy.

In Martin, the artist, I lost a friend of high genius. He was a member of the committee of the Literary Union, an unassuming man treated with a species of disdain by the Academy of Painters. He left behind him a renown well earned. His power of delineating the more vast and sublime objects of his imagination, applied to historic scenes or poetical fictions was wonderful, and in this he stood alone among English artists. He was feebly and ineffectually imitated by several artistical plagiarists. A master in perspective, he struck every reflective mind with the grandeur as well as originality of his pictorial conceptions. His works had a certain degree of hardness upon the canvas, but were still noble specimens of his skill. He was opposed openly and secretly by those of the brush who paint by line and rule. To such an extent was this spirit carried, that if he had not been able to engrave his own works, he would have been put down. In England his engravings had a prodigious run ; and abroad his works are known from the Seine to the Neva.

He was a man of much simplicity of character, originally designed for an herald painter, as that fine artist, Stanfield, was for a scene painter, but then he had the support of royalty to introduce him into the Academy, or with all his talents, he would hardly have found an entrance within the circuit of the forty wise men. It is the proud attribute of genius to soar above the letter which would enchain its spirit and confine it to the beaten track, just as the true impress of religion in the heart soars about the pharasaical formality of lip worship.

Martin I used to meet in Allsop's Place, where he displayed, in communicating his ideas, great imaginativeness and a rich fancy. Portrait painting tires, even the portraits of Reynolds, and those of Sir Thomas Lawrence, weary the observer who has no interest in the characters represented. I have often observed the difference between Reynolds and Lawrence. The portraits of the former appear well bred, those of the latter as if they were representations of individuals among the middle class, who were endeavouring to be taken for those above them. Hence the pleasure derived from fancy subjects is greater. Martin was distinguished by much mechanical ingenuity out of his art. The massiveness and grandeur of his principal works have composed his worthiest monument. His designs for Milton contrast admirably with the distortions of Fuseli, whose figures were shapes neither of heaven, nor earth, nor the water under the earth. Nothing is more marked, in the present day, than the coldness of the public towards such eminent men, a thing once not observable, because men felt, in truly estimating art, they honoured themselves, now their conceit makes them imagine they honour art by their notice of it.

The works of great artists are photographic copies of their modes of thinking or imagining, addressed immediately to the vision. In this they differ from the workings of great minds as conveyed in books. We hear spoken, we hear read, or see in books for ourselves, the aspirations of great souls. They address us through more than one sense, as the more imperishable of mundane things. It is fitting that what springs from an unfathomable depth or soars

to heaven, or dares the abyss which separates time and space, that which leaves no trace of its rising or setting, no foot track of its coming in or going out, should possess the principle of things most enduring, and most remote from decay. From books, embodied thought awakes to life in the human heart, generates there other thoughts and establishes yet nobler principles. There too, are set in motion, results which linking together moral and physical power, revolutionize mankind without bloodshed, change almost imperceptibly, and by degrees, the habits and opinions of men, neither alarming pride nor wounding vanity, until whole races become regenerated, and looking back upon those who have neglected to learn such a lesson, say "where we ever as ignorant and as blind as you?"

Happily, all the kings of the earth united, cannot eradicate from the nations one little symbol of undying thought, conveyed in a dried up liquid upon the most fragile of substances. The number of high-toned and profound thinkers is fewer than ever compared to those of the common and inferior classes. Hence it is that dealers in books prefer only those adapted for the largest number of readers, books being with them only mercantile ware, and the fabrication governed by that principle alone. Writers do not rule here as they did formerly. There can be no greater mistake than to suppose the extensive sale of a work the criterion of its intellectual merit. Such a sale is rather a proof that the publication descends so low in calibre as to come within the comprehension of a greater number of readers, or, in other words, of the less expanded minds, and in the next place, that the

goods are cheaper than those which are more profound. Thus the sale of novels is enormously large, and some argue that the age is advanced by it. This is not true, everybody comprehends such works, however narrow their intellectual faculties, and all find pleasure from what they can comprehend without looking farther. Such works generate an indisposition to read history and useful literature. This was the opinion of the first novel writer this country has produced, Sir Walter Scott. The only hope he thought was that they might convey to youth, by true pictures of life, (that is when they are true pictures) some awakening of the better feelings and sympathies, through their display of fictitious woe and generous sentiment. Beyond this, Scott thought them mere luxuries for amusement, and not vehicles of instruction. Too true it is, that the prevalent love of literature fluctuates in taste like the fashions in dress. That there is so little increase in knowledge among the bulk of the people, although so much is made of it when supported by the argument, that the circulation of books is extensive, is not wonderful. It is not the number, but the nature of books which contributes to the stock of mental advancement. Hence it may be seen how necessary it is, that the novel should be constructed so as to effect that modicum of good which it is capable of imparting. There were never fewer original and profound works than at present. The majority of this class of books now produced are reprints.* Works of science scarcely repay the expense of printing. We are apt to say when

* In a particular and most exclusive manner that of Mr. H. Bohn of York Street.

we hear of fortune-tellers and conjurors playing off their tricks, "Who would think it in this age of popular information." But spirit-rapping, mesmerism, phrenology, vegetarianism, allopathy, movement-cure, and an endless number of similar things, have not their footing among the humbler classes, but are proofs of the credulity of the classes that possess wealth, read novels, and move in the middle and upper walks of life. In this respect, these classes are not one degree above giving credit to the gipsy or the conjurer of the hamlet. That they are better patronized, and the crotchets of more respectable and better clothed practitioners is too true. Some of these silly things, as mesmerism, for example, our fathers examined and exposed four-score years ago. Let us neither call our improvement in social amenity, in political freedom, nor in scientific discoveries, the result of the popular acumen, these were worked out by unconscious agents, and originated in obscurity with insulated minds. Stevenson dreaded the incredulity of statesmen as to his plans—plans capable of demonstration. He was indebted for success to the desire for a particular convenience, and to the lust of procuring gain by that means. We might as well ascribe Palmer's acceleration of the mails to the popular advance of his day.

When a select committee of the House of Commons was formed to consider the onerous state of the wine duties, which on some wines reached to five or six hundred per cent, and were materially at war with every principle of free trade, I was ordered to attend and give evidence. I was examined at considerable length, as may be seen in the blue books of the House

of Commons. I was much struck with the opposition shewn to a measure, which was no more nor less than a necessary carrying out of the free trade system. No one but Mr. Gladstone made the acknowledgment, that the time must come when these duties, as well as others of a similar character, will be reduced. The circumstances of the moment prevented the government from then considering the subject, the opening of the budget being near at hand. The reign of the Earl of Derby was short. I was one of the deputation that went up to his lordship in Downing Street upon that occasion.

Being the last that left the room, only a few yards down the passage, I ran, in the dim light of that moment, against some one hastening in. It was Mr. Disraeli, who had come, so it was said, to announce that the shattered ministry, to which he belonged, was no longer in existence. It is singular that since the death of Peel, the steps necessary for carrying out free trade, have ceased altogether, as if that measure, having been a *cheval de bataille*, for the purpose of opposition to one set of ministers, that object being gained, the details of the measure might remain as they did for all the succeeding governments cared about them. It is true the Russian war put an end to any great measure in favour of free trade for a time, and now India can be made the excuse, but I shrewdly suspect the free trade details would without these impediments have remained where they are.

Professions in candidates for office cost nothing, they are mere trifles, and no one makes a figure in politics who sticks at trifles. Whoever feels the promptings

of ambition, and is too honest to make empty professions, who will not practice claptraps in order to rise in public life, will succeed with difficulty. Occasionally those who achieve peculiar and worthy things, beyond the limit of the vulgar gaze, place having invested them with high honours, may become idols of an overweening worship, but such cases are rare, and the work of talent, and long labour. Wariness and the manipulation of a hundred hypocrisies will bring a man much sooner into power and influence. I wish statesmen, the majority of whom I believe are the worst principled of mankind, would always act as if they were before the public. Actions temporarily concealed, and revealed by time, damage the character of politicians of high talent. That which they had once concealed from fear of getting into disesteem, though at the time half ashamed of it, when the future displays the secret become spectacles of pity to angels and to men.

Thus in Lord Malmesbury's Memoirs, in regard to Pitt, for example, if the account of the ignorance of that statesman of the world at large, had been related by any historian he would not have been credited. Pitt once answered a speech of Sheridan's, speaking for an hour and half, and then asked Sheridan, what his speech was about; the fact being that he spoke as lawyers call it against time, without relevance to the topic, pretended to be answered, for he was ignorant of it. So Sheridan, when Fox quoted Greek in his speeches, after complimenting his honourable friend on his quotation, remarked that he should have added the remainder, and then himself gave a pretended quotation of the passage he said was omitted, a jargon

of his own composition and not Greek at all, being something like the well known Anglo-Greek passage of the school boys, which I will not repeat. The House took it with the utmost simplicity as the genuine thing. Such was the value of political scholarship in those days, and the imagined wisdom of an unreformed parliament. Pitt's knowledge of life was very circumscribed. He was Chancellor of the Exchequer at twenty-three. He had read little but the classics before that time, and afterwards he had no leisure to read, but only to raise coalitions, and taxes to pay them, and some of his resources were laughably indefensible.

His fluency of speech was the most surprising of his talents—"he could speak off a king's speech." His coalitions against France were common bargains. He found the money, our allies took it, and got well beaten in return, and it broke his heart. Such was the history of this minister's career, proud as he was, unyielding, and somewhat egotistical. By the by, the greatest egotists I remember were Cobbett and Southey. It is curious, too, that they were alike notorious political delinquents, having served two or three political purposes, no doubt, with the same sincerity. Both were clever writers, Southey was the greatest sophist. Both were exemplary in domestic life, Cobbett was vulgar and loved to shew the despot by keeping his household strictly subordinate to his will, his wife scarcely dared at any time to remonstrate with him; Southey was kind and hospitable in his family.

Rogers, too, I always found a kind man. He was exceedingly cautious of giving offence to any one, and it was difficult to obtain his real opinion of any literary

character. In speaking of him to a friend, and remarking Rogers' expertness at an epigram, he said, he thought Byron had observed the same thing.

"Rogers," said he, "has an epigrammatic mouth—a mouth characterized by a contractile quality, the power of a sort of pincer's squeeze lurks about it. It was wonderful he did not come out as an English Martial, perhaps, I should rather say a Juvenal."

Talking one day after dinner of the necessity of employing attorneys in doing everything, so that a man must keep in with them whether he wishes it or not. Rogers said, "not in doing everything, my dear sir, the bottle is in with you, we cannot drink by attorney."

Campbell speaking of Rogers, remarked that he thought he liked people to be under an obligation to him, for if you borrowed money of him, after you repaid it, he never seemed half as much on terms with you as he was before.

When I told Rogers that Mr. —— had got a place under government, to which no salary was yet affixed, but he was proud of it. "Poor fellow," said the poet, "the handsomest cage won't feed the bird."

It was melancholy to hear him when his memory failed, and also the unconnected questions he asked; I had not seen him for some years. I found myself near his grave at Hornsey in one of my long rambles, no great time after his funeral, nature in full bloom around, to eyes that could no more behold her beauty. His ashes "unwept," left "to wither to the parching wind, without the meed of a melodious tear."

I have said, that in seeking celebrated scenes, I

am partial to, such visitings, as churchyards where noted men lie, or battle-fields famous in history. I love to imagine the clash of the combatants and shoutings of the battle. I fancy all the manœuvres if I have a clue to them in historical details. It is a raising of the spirits of the past in corporeal reality, deciding the fate of empires. Once at Naseby, I imagined Cromwell's wing of iron horsemen on the ground, and Ireton on the left. I saw the royal baggage waggons in the rear of the king's army, and the long line of glittering and luxurious cavaliers, to be soon scattered before the ranks of the parliament. I observed the smoke of the artillery, and the advancing lines, here the main body, there the wings—all these things looked like the reality for a moment. It is true I saw only in fancy, I heard nothing. The eyes are the portals of our imaginings when we visit such spots, or like the field at Hastings, which I have said Campbell and myself visited together.

I was speaking of the personal beauty of Englishwomen while sojourning at Hastings. Campbell was a great admirer of English beauty. He admitted fully the wrong direction of the female mind, and a captivating of the other sex by show. The deficiency in personal beauty of women in France, I made him admit was often fully compensated by their superior carriage, and the charm of their address. I alleged that they had wit and vivacity, both which are too often wanting among English beauties. Their manners were engaging, they were unaffectedly cheerful, and they were never so destitute of ideas as not to bear their share in conversation. To this the poet agreed, and that his knowledge of them was slight. I remarked that a

Frenchwoman was more anxious to see than to be seen. She endeavoured to increase her stock of subjects for social converse, and was less solicitous about attracting general observation than the observation of the individual who might hold her affections, or who might be no more than the favourite of the moment, for a Frenchwoman, independently of any affair of the heart, is eminently an enjoyer of the social circle. It was always difficult to discover the source of the influence a woman of that country exercised over me, in the presence of others with much higher pretensions to personal charms. They certainly have a superior power of pleasing, much owing to their cheerfulness, their lively manners, and little attentions in common things, all tending to please, and nature as usual attaches us most to those things, animate or inanimate, which impart pleasure. I was once travelling by diligence to St. Omer, on my way to Calais, ten years after my first residence in the country. There were two pleasing young ladies and their mother, the only passengers besides myself. We entered into conversation, and once or twice got out of the vehicle and walked up the hills. I was not in good spirits, and one of the sisters told me she saw I was not. She hoped I had met with nothing of a distressing nature, that I certainly did not bear my usual character, which they assumed to be a cheerful one. At dinner they pressed me to eat by pointing out some delicate dishes, and in the kindest manner, with easy vivacity, rallied me upon the folly of nourishing my gloom, until they fairly got me out of it, and told me how happy they were at being successful. I parted from the three ladies with a regret I never felt under such circumstances

before. I left them at St. Omer. I have long made up my mind as to the nature of the power Frenchwomen exercise in company. It is the art of pleasing with vivacity and good-nature, in the simplest things. In the above instance, I might have travelled a thousand miles in England, and an exchange of monosyllables been all that took place. Frenchwomen are not in general handsome, there is a greater show of female beauty in England, but here many a beautiful young creature is but a piece of fine statuary. She has nothing to say, no vivacity, little or no conversation, the truth being that with an expensive education just completed, they go into society without having made use of the key they possess to cultivate that knowledge of things, which, if superficial, is the material of which the Gallic ladies make so masterly a use. In England, education is a superfluity beyond the faculty it confers of writing a letter, reading a novel, and, having taste or not, the art of strumming a tune on the piano. In France, the ladies know a little upon a variety of topics, and make the most of that knowledge, rendering attractive that which is not very profound, by the manner in which it is delivered in the conversational contributions of the social circle. The better female minds in England are found in their middle age, when the art of captivating has fallen into desuetude, giving their leisure to read and study more attentively than before.

The captivating character of the ladies of France is universally admitted, even in advanced life, where their influence with the other sex, is founded upon the consciousness of the pleasure enjoyed in their society. It is true, the French ladies sometimes change their

vivacity for volatility, and then a reaction ensues, but these are exceptional cases. There is a class of French ladies who are styled of the *haut ton*, who figure in gay life, and the world of fashion, with all its levities, I speak not of such, but rather of those of provincial towns, and of a class in the metropolis, naturally the abode of a medley of all orders and characters. As women of business and managers of affairs at home, I know none who excel them. The sciences of the counter, the ledger, and the general operations of trade seem to be inherited by the female sex in France.

"That is all very well," Campbell observed, "but I prefer my own north country lasses to both, taking them generally. I imagine this impression is a youthful one imbibed from our first amatory feeling being directed towards those to whom we are earliest accustomed."

I replied, "I could not argue in that, I was a cosmopolitan in affairs of the heart, and might perchance love a Creole in preference to one of his red haired Glasgow lasses."

"Then you must be a traitor to your country," said the poet, "hanging, drawing and quartering are too good for you."

I expressed my opinion which time has confirmed, that the intellectual improvement of female society in England, advances much more rapidly than that of the other sex, men seem to retrograde. The poet would not agree with me.

They who know not the pleasures of imagination, know not half of those which life can import, even if they enjoy their other faculties in perfection, all is

plodding repetition. The square staid matter of fact, cold, individual, may be contented with his allotment. A minimum may serve him within his little circle, and as the capacity measured so may be the enjoyment. The caged bird may not miss the freedom of the skies because he has never known liberty, but the wing that expatiates at large feels the exhilarating influence of its free will range, inhales the brisk freshness of an atmosphere of greater levity in a loftier region, and receives a pleasure unknown to the captive. The boundless circuit of imagination teems with vivifying pleasure, and an imagination of great liveliness attaches naturally to the female character. There are new images and novel sensations continually presenting themselves which bring delight to the spirit, however insubstantial. It is no mean gratification to weave visions of good, to project schemes of benevolence for the benefit of others, to contemplate schemes beyond earth's dim spot, and to lose ourselves in holy aspirations. It is from such imaginings that improvements open to elevate mankind, when they take a shape permitting realization. The language of poetry has proved prophetic, and a realization has been traced up to the source of the original idea in the poet's dream, or the supposed incoherence of some prolific fancy.

Men who idealize from every day things, often give erroneous guesses as to the commonest actions, and form ill-judgments, sometimes too extravagant, and at others too stinted of the effects of what they observe, some of the sanguine will judge far beyond the ground they have to go upon, and others will only see the dark side of things. This is because they have been ac-

customed to live in a realm of their own, where the good predominates over the evil, and everything is accommodated to the desires of the mind. Hence Shelley was not understood, in his day, and barring out his wayward natural disposition, Byron was esteemed an unaccountable by "the general." The reasoning, as well as imaginative faculty, is an incomprehensible thing. As to the imagination, some of those who have possessed it in perfection, have shewn it most in youth. In Campbell it was greatly weakened, I take it, at an early age, that of Byron a little later, in Pope it began early, but in Dryden it was not visible till late, and continued unabated into age, with Waller to full eighty years, with Milton too, it was continued till late in life, and in Shakspeare certainly after middle life. It, therefore, must wholly depend upon constitution and temperament, how long the vigor of the imaginative faculty will flourish in fulness of bloom, for there is no rule to settle its duration.

I doubt if the vividness of Campbell's imagination was not in a very considerable degree faded before thirty. Perhaps, a too early reputation deadened future effort. The object for which the man was "to scorn delight and live laborious days" was attained, or there might have been a consciousness of exhaustion, and a despairing idea that he could not surpass his first works.

Apropos of the last named poet—it was not for want of suggestions, nor even direct hints as to the subject that he wrote so little. He would sometimes say, "you are always asking me for something, but I cannot tell what to write about—think of a subject."

I promised, and considering for a day or two, put half a dozen subjects on a slip of paper, but I do not

remember his adopting my suggestion but twice. The subject in one case was the camp-field already mentioned, suggested to him on the spot. It was on a day of beauty, I well remember, as we lounged on that lofty cliff—a day, to quote Milton, when a poet might well listen at nature's feast—

“To what unshorn Apollo sings
To the touch of golden wires, while Hebe brings
Immortal nectar to her kingly sire.”

We had scrambled that morning to the top of the East Cliff in company with a London bookseller of Herculean mould, whom Campbell had invited to dine with him. The day was warm, and before we were half way to the summit of the cliff, the bibliopolist was not only out of wind, but covered with a copious perspiration. Campbell active enough for a much more difficult task, gave me a look, which I comprehended immediately, that we should push upward at once, glancing his eyes mischievously on our bulky companion, who insisted he could go no further without he pulled off his coat. This he did as fast as his fatigue would permit, and then like another Sysiphus he went on toiling and panting upward again. Campbell's amusement was expressed in a side glance to me now and then, as we proceeded. The toiling bibliopole, in the prime of existence as to years, evidently was no mean trencher-man, and looked like a Farnese Hercules out of breath after a ponderous foot-race. The summit being attained, we were obliged to halt there some minutes. This my companion called “breathing a bookseller.”

Then it was I suggested the cliff-camp as a subject

for the poet's verse. We walked to Fairlight, and returning to St. Leonard's to dinner, the bibliopolist dropped into a chair from which he moved with difficulty to the table, his appetite keen, his countenance still oleaginous. To mend matters he eat so voraciously, that I believe for a couple of hours he would have found some difficulty in moving from his seat, strong and muscular as he was. He reminded me of a boa-constrictor after having gorged an ox. At the hour of retiring, he moved off to the hotel, like one of the Christmas show pigs at an agricultural gathering. For some time after, the poet could not help alluding to the subject, as one to which he had never before seen any resemblance in the animal tendencies of his fellow bipeds. I myself never before witnessed such a picture of the effect of a good bodily self-indulgent constitution, overlaid with little exercise and hard eating. Campbell never forgot the scene, and rejoiced at the hero of it being a bookseller, as it was a rare case that "an author ever got the weather gage from one of the trade." We strolled to the libraries where the visitors came, fearfully put to it, to pass their time. The resources of some for this purpose were ludicrous.

"I will hold you a guinea that man standing on the verge of the sea is wishing the dinner hour was come."

"Let us watch him from my window, we can talk there," said Campbell.

The man alluded to, was a solitary, who "had come to enjoy himself, and for three good hours did 'enjoy' his move up and down within a square of twenty yards."

"It is foolish for such people to come here—a ridiculous custom."

“No, no,” said Campbell “do you not remember Hudibras:—

‘Should once the world resolve to abolish
All that’s ridiculous and foolish,
It would have nothing else to do,
To apply in jest or earnest to.’”

I believe the poet to have been a man of considerable personal courage, if put upon his metal, though, at times, nervous. The natives of the three kingdoms differ in exhibiting it. The English and Scotch are more calm than the Irish. I have seen men in moments of danger, and such is the time for trying, not merely their courage, but their character. When a boy, at a *depôt* for prisoners of war, near Falmouth, I could not help regarding certain differences between the English and French character. They were letting a heavy ladder down into a well, and some of the prisoners were assisting. The ladder got too heavy for those who were holding it, and nearly drew them into the well with it. When the danger increased, and became imminent, the Frenchmen let go, and ran off, while the Englishmen clung closer to the ladder. Two or three fresh hands coming up, prevented the mischief, which seemed inevitable. So some travellers in Egypt said, that, when a storm occurred in Alexandria, the vessels of the Mediterranean ports were made as snug as possible at their anchors, and then their crews hurried on shore. While to the vessels from beyond the straits, English, French, or Dutch, the crews were observed hastening on board, in order, by their presence and experience, to obviate any mischief that might happen, which it was in their power to remedy. I remember being told by a naval officer

how characteristic the conduct of the natives of the three nations was when standing by their guns, cleared for action, and in pursuit. He noticed how differently the Irish conducted themselves from the English and Scotch, being restless and noisy.

During the siege of Sebastopol, when it was some way advanced, the mention made to me by a friend, several years before, in relation to a mode of throwing shot without heavy artillery, occurred as likely to be useful, especially where the approaches had been tolerably advanced. I instituted several experiments, upon a very small scale, with success, using pewter in place of iron, weighing the powder, and taking the distances and proportions as approximative to more important instruments and results. I had only the general idea with which to begin. I was so satisfied of the practicability of the means, as far as I had tried them, and that they might be used with effect in *ricochet* firing, at about point blank distance, that I wrote to the select committee of officers of artillery, at Woolwich, on the subject. My idea was to throw shot or shell, made in a mode adapted to the peculiar principle, with no more than a horizontal bed, like that of a mortar, from which to discharge the missile. The exposure of the men was greatly husbanded, the missile being brought to the battery ready loaded. With the general theory of gunnery, I was acquainted, having been much in garrisoned places in boyhood, and in 1814 I had been some time in Woolwich as an observer. To practical knowledge I could not, of course, lay claim. The statement to me, by my deceased friend, was barely sufficient to make me acquainted with the idea. The charging out of the

reach of an enemy's fire was most important, as not a third of the number of men required to work a heavy gun needed to appear at all upon the battery. If the shot, thus projected, were dropped in over the enemy's rampart, and did its work, *en ricochet*, although it might not answer for long distances, the advantage would be incalculable. Hollow, as well as solid, shot, of any diameter, might be thus projected. On explaining my ideas personally to the select Committee of the Board of Ordnance, they listened with the utmost attention, and told me that something of the same nature had been before proposed to them. I related how I had experimented, that it was new as regarded the missile, and that the conjuncture had prompted me to draw their attention to it. There was a difficulty started as to the mode of meeting the recoil, which must be considerable. This I had foreseen, and as far as thought needful, provided for by a solid carriage, or rather bed, by which the force of the recoil from the elevation likely to be most used would be met, the difficulty increasing towards the horizontal line. There would always be some degrees of elevation in the use, and only when below 20° or 25° would the recoil be considerable. I had not the plan of the carriage with me, but I sent it down afterwards. It somewhat resembled the slide of a ship carronade carriage, on a solid bed, working up an inclined plane.

The answer I received was fully as much to the purpose as I expected, namely, that it would be applicable to the service "at low velocities." This was all I had intended. I was aware, except in a siege, and not at great distances, that the missile was not so likely to

be effective, my idea having been solely directed to batteries *en ricochet*, and to sparing labour and life.

Nothing could be more to the purpose, nor apparently more earnest and attentive to the subject placed before it, than this Board, overwhelmed as it was with scheming absurdities. In every respect, I found the members gentlemanly and considerate, where patience was a virtue imperiously required. I saw schemes and models there which bore evidence their projectors had never seen artillery missiles used in their lives. The fame of our artillery abroad is widely spread, and I do not believe it has retrograded in excellence. Indeed, the work now turned out at Woolwich with the same power, is three or four times more than it was last war, principally by improved machinery. Having been much there during that time, I was curious to inquire about the differences and changes which have taken place, and found it never was in higher perfection than at the present moment.

CHAPTER IX.

WHEN an individual has been well educated, and in the course of things is, perhaps, the member of an inn of court, or comes from the university or not, as the case may be, and enters upon life as a literary man, he begins to feel an ardent love for study, and is led into an attachment for that laborious employ. There are few can imagine how that life becomes second nature, how the devotion to a pursuit which absorbs the whole mind, and makes time fleet with increased rapidity, strengthens its hold upon the spirit. It is not in literature as in the pursuits of life in general, that men arrive at a point in which, from having attained the mastership, they can proceed no farther. The mind is led on from one stage to another, from mastering one ascent, to the view of Alp beyond Alp yet to be surmounted ; and such is the prospect, let life be ever so protracted. Still we see :

“Now distant scenes of endless science rise.”

We ardently follow the road to knowledge, and in the meridian of life, find, as on setting out, that we are Tyros still, while we have derived but little of what the world most esteems, by which we are to support our vitality in age, until a last resting place is found in the lap of the common mother.

If we were worldly wise, therefore, we should turn to some money-making pursuit, but for this we find ourselves wholly unfit. We cannot take up with petty details, we have always thought upon a large scale, and acted upon it. We cannot alter our mode of thinking, and our customary habits, our elevated views, our expectations of good gleaned from reflecting on the undying minds of the wise in all ages, and exchange them for small beginnings, hagglings, and outwittings in traffic. We cannot think as the world thinks, if we would; we had rather not think so. We are chained to the stake, and must die there. The course of things has prevented us from reaping the fruit of our own toil. We have expended the oil, and the hour of darkness approaches, without the power of replenishing it. We have wasted the spring-time of life in seeking wisdom and understanding, but are not destined to reap the benefit of these acquirements. We toil that others may reap, the only race in the community so situated. We have no mode of access to the public judgment, but by the sacrifice of our mental qualifications, our labour, our anxiety, and our health, to enrich others. We are martyrs in a certain sense to the public gratification.

When I quitted town, I parted with my library, which cost me years to acquire. I looked at the well-laden shelves for the last time, and re-called how frequently I had thought, if the room had only opened on a good-sized garden, or on a rural landscape, the world might have its palaces for me. Those loaded shelves all spoke to me like voices from the dead, pregnant with what was elevating, good, and attaching to the heart,

and I, who have roamed much about the world, thought how contented I could be to die there, a captive, and be conveyed to my last rest, weary of a distempered pilgrimage, rather than continue to mingle in bustle again. I was quite ready to toil away in thanklessness, the allotted hours of existence on that spot, and living in the midst of the spirits of the past, to continue to pay my quota to the social good in my long continued avocation.

But had I, therefore, no enjoyment? Here lies the rub. Everybody who has taken a dose of laudanum to ease pain, knows the soothing effect, the momentary forgetfulness of care, which follows the dose. Here it is enjoying an intermediate state between pleasure and pain, through the mind being fully occupied. The allotted task places the feeling in a state of negation. We become lovers of the toil, the absorption in which deadens care, but we also become to the full extent, incapable of changing the employment that, perhaps, for half a century we have followed. What then remains for those who have not been able to realize an independency?

The difficulty of an author getting out a first work, if it be really new and original, is great, and is at present more so than ever. When it does happen that a truly original work appears, every scribe who wields a pen is beseeched by the trader to write as like it as possible, in matter and style, because it "has sold very well." When Mr. Dickens published one of his earlier works, I was busy in the field of politics. I had never since my youth been a great reader of works of fancy, but, seeing some passages copied in the London papers, pleasing

me, I ordered the work from town. What was my surprise to receive the numbers with a continuation and conclusion by another writer, that of one who had, no doubt, been hired by some sordid hand to take up the story where its author had left off, while the sheets of the original writer were wet from the press. This was a species of robbery, committed in order that the continuation might appear to belong to the original writer. I refused the copy, and sent it back to town. The secret of profiting by imitation this way, is one too often exemplified.

The number of readers of profound works, as with those of learning, has not increased in proportion to readers for amusement, so that all advance together. It is here that our non-progression is too singularly visible. Works of fancy are alone perused by the many, particularly by the young, and this is taken for mental advance in the higher order of intellectual acquirement. It was agreed for a wager, a short time since, to put the question to twenty "educated" young men, in the present phrase, one after another, had they read any of Goldsmith's works—the "Vicar of Wakefield," for example. Only two knew anything about his works, but nineteen had read "Jack Sheppard," that is, had read what happened to amuse the passing moment.

Such being the fluctuations in literature, it is not without reason that the wiser individuals in civilized nations see how extensive is the benefit literary men contribute to the public good—good, I may almost say measureless, and sometimes aid them. The caprices of the public taste may enable one literary man in a great number, and no more, to attain a scanty com-

petency. He lives to sustain traders whose modes of thinking and dealing are as wide from his own as the poles are asunder, the reciprocity of their connection always existing under feelings totally estranged.

Many are the hours retired and in heavy labour that those who work out great public good in literary works are compelled to pass. But there are some lower branches of literature, where men toil hard enough to serve the public interests, without the consolation of being recognized writers. In the old newspaper time, the editor, unlike some at present, were men of education, and any errors in those publications were rarely seen to arise from want of knowledge in the subjects treated upon. When I became acquainted first with this class of political writers, they were men of considerable acquirements, and well known by reputation. They were, as they should be, regarded as the ruling spirit of the publication, and possessed sterling principles on the side they advocated. They often retired from their duties to some public situation, at home or abroad. This has long ceased. The monied proprietary of newspapers now, regard them as means to forward their trading purposes. An editor is not considered of such moment on similar establishments. He must be Tory, Whig, and Radical, in turn, if it be the order of a proprietary, the larger part of which may be barely able to spell their own names, otherwise he must leave the concern. No superior spirit alone rules the pen. To cozen a sale, the most indefensible doctrines of the many or few are held up as virtues. Does a sullen dissatisfaction pervade the

minds of the humbler classes of society, it is at once pampered and extolled on the trading principle of getting a sale from them; to talk here of the integrity of the press is absurd. To me, the vocation of the press implies something better than this inculcation of discontent, unless it is justifiable in principle, not in interest. Every measure from an authority is declared bad, because there is a spirit abroad among certain of the labouring classes, which, unhappy from other causes, vents itself upon the government, for the time being, be it of what party it may, as if any government were faultless, and this without specifying solid grounds for discontent, because neither the praise nor blame of the government is the end of the diatribe. The act of a pecuniary speculation upon principles, is an abuse of the press, making a trade of truth. Let not this be made a charge against the literary men of this country. The capitalist bears down all, perverting the best things. The mercenary principle intertwines itself here, and becomes irresistible. It corrupts, defiles and degrades even our altars. As madder pervades the texture of the bones in the human frame, so the lust of lucre pervades and neutralizes the efforts of the better literary spirits in their vocation, deteriorating the offspring of mind, and defeating the high mission of the writer.

In regard to the labours in this branch of literature, well qualified men have too often had much to endure. Their toils are by no means as light as the popular ignorance on the subject would induce the world to believe. The qualification for the duty (I speak only of those duly qualified) is no trivial acquirement, and the

emoluments rarely equal the labour and cost of the previous instruction, though formerly it was very different. The writing, day by day, let the mind be well or ill tuned to the labour, the infinite variety of subject, of which some knowledge must be acquired, all tend to show that the task is one of the heaviest that can be undertaken. Even style must be studied for popular adaptation. The responsibility of a minister of state, is, no doubt, great, and his duties various ; but his toil is recompensed by his gratified ambition. What recompense in ambition meets him who labours for the public thanklessly, in secret, under the blighting influence of an insolent venality ? The burthen is sometimes intolerable to a shrinking spirit, seldom imbued with the courage and spirit of the philosopher of old !

There was always a class of literary men in my earlier time, who were of the world, mingled in society, and made themselves all things to all men, but they generally disappointed vulgar expectation. Apparently trifling and joyous as others, people wondered how exhibiting no difference from others, they should publish works that afforded them so much pleasure.

But here the author plays a double character, the real being concealed under the assumptive. He cannot interchange his thoughts with those who have no similar feelings, no sympathy with the hour when he, contemplative and earnest, is working out in solitude the undertaking which affords them pleasure. It is among the select few, not the heterogeneous many, that one mind interchanges with the other to advantage.

Thus a dinner party, if of more than six or eight, is not

good for the communication of ideas. I myself for many years avoided numerous dinner parties, and what are called public dinners. The conversation is wholly unimproving, noisy, and desultory. Nor is there any benefit in marching up and down a crowded room, hearing common-place repetitions. Neither literature nor science are to be cultivated at levees or routs.

The members of the old-fashioned clubs of half a century ago, derived pleasure and improvement from conversation. They are past. Modern clubs are only large taverns, with the same unsocial company over again. Calm reasoning, or agreeable listening, is not to be had from a well or ill-clothed multitude.

I once belonged to a very pleasant conversation club, called the Literary Fund Club. It had no connection but in name with that excellent institution for the assistance of authors in narrow pecuniary circumstances in Great Russell Street, an institution conducted on the best principles for the end it purposes, and widely known as the Literary Fund. The chairman was Sir B. Hobhouse, the father of the present Lord Broughton. On the death of Sir Benjamin, Lord Broughton became chairman. I am ignorant at what period it ceased to exist, owing to my long absences from town. There were seldom as many as a dozen members present at a meeting, which rendered conversation snug and agreeable. Good wine and the zest afforded by the conversation of individuals of considerable mental endowments made memorable the social enjoyments of the hour. The club was held at the Freemason's Tavern, and much resembled the clubs of the olden time.

The pleasures of an author generally tend to circumscription in social intimacy. If a writer make a name, and if his intellectual productions are admired, he attains an honest notoriety, not to be compared with those who cozen a reputation. Many for a little celebrity will figure as harlequins, or as Hamlets, characters to themselves totally indifferent, if they can catch the applause of the galleries.

I remember when I lived in France, a man condemned to the galleys for life being first branded. He had stopped the diligence near Avignon, with twelve passengers, and robbed them all, making them one and one get out and lie down on their faces. The whole story would have furnished an excellent subject for the graphic pen of Mr. Thackeray, who finishes off Gallic characters so admirably, as I can myself vouch. But to the point. When they applied the burning iron to his flesh, he scorned to shrink, and exclaimed,

“Who would not bear this and more for so much glory. I robbed twelve of them, and had no accomplice ; à la gloire, mon ami !” he exclaimed to the man with the branding iron.

It was night when he performed the exploit, having stuck up in a wood by the roadside, two or three stuffed manikins, and a small fire kindled near, to make them look like brother bandits.

This man’s was the true Cambyzes vein. This love of good or evil notoriety it is which

“Plots, preys, preaches, pleads,
Harangues in speeches, squeaks in masquerades.”

So it was with the man who set fire to the Ephesian temple for notoriety, and the courtier at Rome, who being with the Emperor Charles V. on the roof of St. Peter's, felt tempted to take him in his arms and fling him over, to obtain renown by the exploit. The morality of the action no more troubling the courtier, than it troubles the Alexanders of military conquest.

But the ambition of the author of the present day must be circumscribed—modern ambition of this order is ephemeral. There is to be no acknowledgment, but *en masse*. No superior genius is to be regarded, but a perfect equality is to be established, and the desire of money supersede the excellence, obtained by patient study and honest investigation—it is a sign of the times.

The sudden decease of Judge Talfourd surprised his friends, and the world at large. I had known him for thirty-five years and upwards. I have already alluded to our connection.

In everything his industry and punctuality were conspicuous. During a long literary intercourse, he never pleaded for a substitute in a single instance through sickness or pleasure. Of his merits in connexion with histrionic literature, it would be superfluous to express an opinion. Singularities of expression and opinion upon actors and theatrical subjects marked his earlier articles, about the years 1820 and 1822. His chief excellences were of a passive nature. There was nothing impetuous about him—nothing of waywardness. His equanimity and “beauty” of temperament, if I may so express myself, were remarkable. He was not enthusiastic, but he cherished hopes rather good than

ambitious. He was no sordid money-loving advocate, his profession was a means only—a necessity of existence, a task to be unflinchingly executed, even while his heart was yearning after more generous pursuits. Destitute of fortune, and while at the bar a young practitioner naturally stinted in his “receipt of custom,” with others whom he loved looking up to him for support, I knew him, unknown to the world, return to a literary man considerable professional fees when the case had concluded, the language of his generous nature whispering: “Thy necessity is yet greater than mine!” He ever looked beyond the scope of external sense, and to the last “held communion sweet” with the shadowy past. He was not a wit according to existing phraseology, being incapable of turning good into evil, the serious into the ridiculous, for the sake of a vacant risibility. Obliging and civil to all, he sometimes wasted his urbanity where the frugal use would have been more politic. He never made an easiness of principle. When great truths were at stake, he did not shuffle, talk of expediency, and declare he thought it better to leave things as they were than be troublesome by an impertinent wrangling for reformation. He was not formed for a politician. His generous spirit could not be cordial with the chicane and subserviency—the wariness and want of principle of political men, ever intriguing and jealous. The arts of the advocate, the why and wherefore, are well understood by the world, and are but repetitions. He raised considerable expectations, it is true, on entering the House of Commons, as a representative for his native town of Reading, so flattering to his feelings. His friends

expected he would make a figure there. I was not deceived into thinking him a politician, though in legal questions he might have been distinguished in the House. The ministerial party expected something striking. Peel was observed to take out his pencil to make notes, and to listen attentively for a few minutes, and then to replace it deliberately in his pocket; his sagacity and long experience told him that the new member would not be a formidable political opponent. I do not remember Talfourd's writing a line on public affairs.

I never saw him on the bench, and seldom anywhere after 1840, having been long absent from London. Going into the court at the Stafford assizes—that court which neither he nor myself could then dream would be the closing scene of his existence—we met by accident. Only two or three gentlemen of the bar had come in; the judge had not yet made his appearance; we had a short conversation, and I did not see him again until he was elevated to the bench. We shook hands upon his appointment. He looked so changed that I could not help saying, “Neither of us look younger since we met last.” “True,” he observed, “but it is the course of nature.” There was a cast of heaviness, an apparent weight about his head, that was not caused by advancing years, but something unusual, which forced from me the above remark, that afterwards I wished, I knew not why, I had not made.

I have mentioned that Talfourd first wrote in the old series of the “New Monthly,” to which I was myself also a contributor, about which time I first knew him. He then overpraised a particular actor: and his style was

exuberant and somewhat singular. This he subsequently changed for one more chaste, with imagery less affluent. Talfourd regularly supplied me with the drama for ten consecutive years. His contributions to the first part of the magazine were few. He always asserted that a magazine should be a repository for all sorts of opinions. This would be just enough when the editor was not a known character before the public, and when the writers were not anonymous. But the public, when only cognisant of one name, would naturally imagine sentiments diametrically opposite to those of a literary man of reputation, already avowed in print elsewhere, were written or sanctioned by him. This point is now of no moment in magazines. The names of the writers being affixed to the articles, there can be no mistake about the authorship.

A second article of Talfourd's was "A Call to the Bar," a sort of pendant to one that had before appeared called "The Temple," written by the lamented Henry Roscoe. "A Chapter on Time" was his next contribution. I remember a paper entitled "The Profession of the Bar," to which there were several objections, for we were at the same moment publishing papers on the Irish Bar. It was necessary to vary the fare, and it was difficult to refuse a paper of Talfourd's, although it was unmercifully long. I wrote him, therefore, to request he would, if possible, shorten it. He replied by the following note. I was at first apprehensive he was annoyed—I was mistaken, his amenity and amiability of disposition suppressed any feeling of that sort, had it existed :

"2, Elm Court, Temple.

" Dear Sir,

" I have looked over my article on the Bar carefully, with a view to your suggestion, and have submitted it to the perusal of several legal friends, and the result of our review is, that I cannot materially shorten it without rendering it incomplete and partial. To do this would be really to render what would be left untrue, because it would want qualification and equipoise, and, therefore, I am reluctantly obliged to decline the task. I do not write with much hope that you will take the article as it is ; and I should be sorry to impose on you the unpleasant duty of writing a positive refusal, therefore I will understand your silence for an expression of dissent, and, after Tuesday next, if I hear nothing, consider myself left to dispose of the paper as chance may offer, or as I may be able to manage.

" I probably view the subject through the medium of prejudice, but to me it seems very far from being confined in interest to the legal profession. At all events, the Bar of England is as interesting to English readers as the Bar of Ireland, on which a long series of masterly articles is giving. Perhaps, however, I am ungrateful in making this allusion, for I half suspect that the qualified approbation of the subject has been employed as a kind substitution for complaint of the manner in which it is treated.

" When I find leisure, I shall try my fortune once more in an article ; for I have a great desire to appear again in the pages of a work in which I wrote largely in the first days of my authorship—when the Maga-

zine was very inferior to what it is now, and when I, perhaps, was less stupid—meanwhile believe me,

“With many thanks for your polite attention,

“Yours faithfully,

“T. N. TALFOURD.”

“C. Redding, Esq.”

The continuation of the Irish Bar and the English at the same time would not have been politic. Talfourd had had no experience in the vexations of conducting a periodical work of the nature of this, then, complicated magazine, and its double-column matter in addition, nor of the tact necessary to sustain it. All his circle of friends failed in their efforts to maintain a single work of the kind. I myself contributed to the “London Magazine,” which failed. The reason, I think, to have been the want of a more general coincidence in the style and literary opinions it supported, which were too much those of a *coterie* with those of the world at large.

I was careful that no alteration should be made in his dramatic articles, solely on account of his fondness for the subject; an author writes well only when he is free to use his own words. The articles on this topic were wholly in my department, and if I thought sometimes they were too exclusively laudatory of a particular actor, I reflected that the public might be more of his opinion than mine. There was only one casual occurrence of the kind. Campbell was taking coffee with me in Frederick Street one evening, when a letter was brought enclosing the monthly article. I stated what it was, and the poet said,

"Has he noticed Miss Kemble?"

I replied that he had, glancing my eye over the article. I then read it.

"Good," said Campbell, "but let us add a little more."

Campbell, whose friendship was great for Mrs. Siddons—she used to spend many an evening at his house in those pleasant days—then wrote some additions, off-hand, to what Talfourd had sent. Not liking that Talfourd should attribute the alterations, or additions to myself, as I had been so far scrupulous on the subject, I wrote to him accounting for them in the way they really occurred. He wrote back :

"Temple, Tuesday morning.

"Dear Sir,

"I am much obliged by your note, although it was wholly unnecessary to say a word on the alterations Mr. Campbell made in the dramatic article. I am exceedingly glad that Miss Kemble should have the pleasure of reading his richly-coloured praise of her, instead of my poorer eulogy ; and I only wish she may know to how celebrated a pen she is indebted for such a testimony to her genius.

"I should be very glad to join the Literary Union, under such auspices, but unless I can, without annoying my friends, retire from the Verulam Club, of which I am a member, I should hesitate, as a married man, to encroach further on the little time my professional engagements allow me to be with my family.

"Believe me, dear Sir, very faithfully yours,

"T. N. TALFOURD."

"C. Redding, Esq."

I have no notes besides that bear an interest for others. In one, dated from Shrewsbury, March, 1828, he says, as an excuse for not attending to a request until his return to town, "I have been too much engrossed by business, and by sorrow, to do anything." I have no idea to what he referred—no matter, business and sorrow no longer concern him !

The dramatic works of Talfourd, except "Ion," cannot be said to have succeeded, and even in that play there is too much of the absence of Greek character. There are charming passages, but too little that bears the stamp of the identity which the play by name and scene is expected to hold with the personalities of the renowned land of antique fame. Yet it carries about it a tranquil grace, the picture of a finely-modelled mind, and an elegance which renders it highly captivating. In his criticisms he was kind, truthful, lucid, ever ready to tolerate, through the goodness of his nature, that which in strictness he should not have spared. He seemed to feel that the sensibility of an author was of the most tremulous texture, and that if he spared unnecessary pain to others, he need not trouble himself about justification to that public which, instead of being grateful for the right view of the intellectual fare set before it by a judicious critic, is ever ready to make sport of the weaker party. He was in this respect strikingly magnanimous. He attached himself, in the earlier part of his career, to a particular school, and followed the limited views of a small circle of literary friends. Hence for a good while he exhibited a species of mannerism in his style. He had become attached to common and trivial things, as if he thought the most peace and kind-

liness dwelt with them, consequences that others could not perceive. He seemed at first to prefer the indefinite in writing, formless, shadowy, intangible objects, on which he could let loose his imaginings, endeavouring to bring them out in the shape his fancy dictated to himself, if obscure to others. He early possessed a full command of language, and than at times combined his sentences, as if he were on the search for real transpositions of words, rather than compression and perspicuity. Warm in friendship, he was not less so in advocating the particular views he held regarding the writers whom he supported against the censures, which, not always undeserved, were cast upon them, as if the very faults of those he regarded were, in his opinion, to be respected. The actor I have mentioned, who was a favourite with him during his early criticisms, used to draw forth the more extravagant of his encomiums. I could not agree in their justice ; but I believe, as time passed, he moderated his sentiments greatly. It was on a gloomy evening, when London becomes in a moment enveloped in thick darkness, that I called in Elm-court at his chambers, having been in the city. When I entered I could scarcely distinguish their master, who was seated by the fire. When the first salutation was over, Talfourd said :

“ I saw you at the theatre last evening ; how did you like the performance ? ”

“ Not at all ; you know my opinion of tearing a passion to tatters, and —— ”

Here he became fidgetty. I continued, until an unmistakeable uneasiness on the part of Talfourd, who was sitting upon thorns, warned me of something wrong, I

did not know what, and broke the thread of my observations. I had just entered upon a philippic against certain parts of the performance on which he had invited my opinion, and my objugation was directed about a particular actor, who I had thought did not merit the praise he received from the critic. We had frequently a little good-natured sparring about our different opinions of his acting. At this moment the actor was in the room, looking out of the window into the darkness beyond ; nothing could be more *mal à propos*.

The light was so little, that Talfourd's first efforts to rein me in were unnoticed, placing him on sharper thorns. It was awkward on all sides. He then said something foreign to the subject, designed to raise a joke, but it was in vain. I beat a retreat as soon as I could. I afterwards recommended him to have candles a little earlier in future, when he was visited by the heroes of the buskin, as the London atmosphere was so capricious.

He, too, has passed away, and so suddenly ! But, " he that lives the longest dies but young," says Otway. We can only cherish for a time the recollection of the most worthy of our friends. Soon even that recollection must die, and " slip through our fingers like water, and nothing be seen but like a shower of tears on a spot of ground ; there is a grave digged, and a solemn mourning, and a great talk in the neighbourhood, and when the days are finished, they shall be ; and they shall be remembered no more ; and that is like water, too—when it is spilt 'it cannot be gathered up again.' "

Of Campbell, Talfourd knew next to nothing, and gave erroneous opinions of his editorship, mingled with

a few facts. I doubt whether he ever saw the poet, unless casually in Colburn's shop, all the time of his contributions. He could not, therefore, be acquainted with the mode in which the editor did his duties, except through myself. The first article Talfourd contributed was in the peculiar style of the school to which he had attached himself. It was a lamentation on the passing away of old things, and the loss of the poetry of life, by the suppression of mendicity, and other innovations. He was attached to Lamb and some of his particular friends in attempts to establish a periodical work, but none of the school were ever able to succeed in the adventure, though ready to make rules for others. A style more universal was necessary, with views of greater expansion than they possessed. The "London Magazine" was the great effort of that school, and it contained many good articles—but it failed. Hazlitt and Proctor wrote for it as well as Talfourd. I contributed three or four articles—but a *coterie* periodical will not do. The managers may suppose the eyes of the world are upon them, and that they make an impression commensurate with the high estimate they attach to their own principles and labours—but it will be unavailing. To please the world, we must be of the world, and show it to the world, while we fathom its depth, and deplore our being compelled to adapt ourselves to its character.

When Lord Brougham and some of his friends, many years ago, issued their series of instructive works for the poorer classes, Campbell and others asked me to join them. I expressed my doubts of their success, and told several members of the committee, I thought they were flattering themselves with the

hopes of a success they would not find. My labours and means forbade my joining them. I thought that the workman after his ten or twelve hours labour, was too much exhausted to apply his mind to that which he must study hard to comprehend. The works of the society were too good. The majority of people in easy circumstances could not comprehend them. Here, also, I was told that I was in error, but I was not without some experience in the mode of life of the classes for whom these publications were designed, with such good intention to benefit. They were not comprehended but by the few, the very few. Soon afterwards these truths were demonstrated beyond all impeachment. Mr. Knight published his Penny Magazine. In this country there never was a work more easy of comprehension, more varied, better adapted to impart useful instruction, while at the same time it afforded amusement—yet it fell off until only the monthly parts were taken, a proof that they went to a class that could afford to pay for a number of the issues together. Many more people read now than formerly, but they read only works which are congenial to their habits and state of life. The Newgate Calender, extraordinary adventures, and childish stories multiply without end. Some imagine this reading will lead to better things, I do not believe it will ever lead men to right reasoning. The common mind looks only to self gratification, and takes the natural broad road to it, and when the temporary amusement is over, flings the toy aside. Intellectual power is as diverse as that which is corporeal. A conceit of superior knowledge is too often raised among the ill-informed, a very large tribe, and the standard of

literature is continually lowered to suit those who can tolerate none above them in their fallacious judgments. In this way genius is stifled in the bud out of envy, jealousy, or a desire to assume judicial ability where there is no scintillation of pretence for it.

It is unfortunate that while the cheap press is declared essential to what is misnamed education, and the better works of this class are read, there is an under current running of a very different kind, much more captivating, of which little is said, but of which the mischief is enormous in extent. The moralist will not reason like the trader about such works. The Christian must lament over a state of things which views mental corruption as nothing in competition with lucre, while the individual of worthy literary character feels the disgrace. The works of Eugène Sue, and a host of profligate French writers are translated and circulated here by thousands. This is not all, their productions are imitated by unprincipled scribes of our own, and the garbage is read with avidity. We have our Sues, Sands, and Souliés, who paint damnation gaily, and are extolled by that class of writers here who exemplify the progress of what is miscalled "education," that is merely the art of reading and writing, without training minds to principle of any kind, and destitute of regard for virtue and even decency. We cannot wonder at a multiplication of criminals, and a laxity of morals, when we see how common and agreeable everything vicious and odious is made by such writers. Vice is no longer regarded with distaste when it is dandled in our arms, warmed at our hearths, and made the continued burthen of conversation with the young and impressible.

When I first met Douglas Jerrold, it was to proffer me his assistance. His career in life closed while I was writing the preceding page. He was one of the most original writers of the present day, a clever satirist on existing manners, and a true son of genius. Shrewd, observant, extensively read in his country's literature, he possessed the virtues and some of the failings of those on whom nature has lavished choice gifts. His writings owed less to others than to his own originality, a rare thing in the present time. He possessed great readiness of intellect, and a style framed by himself, with a power peculiarly his own, of catching the better portions and salient points of the subjects he handled without much apparent labour. In his dramatic works he scorned the hacknied system of borrowing or altering from foreigners. He had a well-founded confidence in his own abilities, and they did not deceive him. He was our last dramatic writer, in the sense of his plots and characters being his own, as in the good times of our better dramatists. In this he had stood alone, for no brief period, up to the hour of his decease.

Accident—perhaps I should rather say that mysterious bias which comes, we know not how, upon the mind, and indicates the particular track which will lead it to success—accident made him adventure an anonymous contribution to the press. It was successful, and decided his future career. The tendency of his writings is to a sympathy with humble life, warm, with a generous indignation at tyranny and injustice. He too often wrote from this impress, as if the poorer classes were continually oppressed by those more fortunate

in life ; and hence, perhaps, the exaggeration. He started a magazine bearing his own name, and a newspaper, both which were continued for some time, but his fame will rest chiefly upon his dramatic productions. He had much humour, his satire was keen, and readily elicited. His social temperament, quickness of repartee, and hearty conversational talents were conspicuous, and never slackened. His wit was superior to that of Hook, it was much more manly, and not followed out for the sake of the mere laugh alone—it was not a play upon words, so much as the sense of the satire couched beneath them, some concealed verity, or a bit of wit pregnant with worth. Good-natured, and full of philanthropy, he still knew how to apply the lash to the forward fool, or the braggadocio. He did not lose sight of a moral meaning in his pleasantry, which made thinkers as well as talkers regard him with respect. In his society, time flew rapidly away, the party small and the occasion meet. Similar accelerations of time are rare in these days when gold grabbing engrosses the table conversation in company so largely, and the rich and racy in intellect must sit like statues and listen to the recital of Mark Lane prices, or the rise and fall of stock. Even the noble now talk of investments at their tables, and banish the “feast of reason and flow of soul.” To say nothing of literature, the loss at such a time, the loss of a happy companion, and so highly endowed in the social circle, is doubly felt in that of Jerrold—peace to his ashes—

“Lower him with gentle hand into the grave,
And deck the spot with flowers to Genius dear!”

CHAPTER X.

I HAVE observed continued efforts to attain notoriety, made on every side, not seen formerly. The art of making their wares known by shopkeepers, is not more striking and ingenious than that of individuals to acquire a little fame by these methods. A short time ago, I remember, there was no mode for this end, exceeded the championship of a political grievance. The scouring out of sewers under the alarm raised by the medical profession, has become a prominent theme for doctors, engineers, and architects to sound the trumpet upon. The cause of the poor is a standing resource for talk rather than action, and goes a great way. The chairmanship at a charity collection is a thing to be coveted by none less than a peer. Pieces of plate for presentations are not to be despised in the dignity, and the presidentship of a ragged school is a thing to be desired by a prelate. This is all very little in its way, though good may come out of a small vanity. It is better than Mr. Hunt passing down the Strand in a chariot and four to take the chair at a meeting in behalf of the Chartists of his day, to

the fear of our rulers, and the trouble of handing out ball cartridge to the Guards.

I merely recur to these amiable vanities as features in my time, which have made for the poor in certain positions so many 'disinterested' patrons. I have seen the prospects of society continually improve on the whole, though in some things society has retrograded. I have seen it become more matter-of-fact than it once was ; I can scarcely say it is more reasonable through reflection. Where it is more so, chance has operated in creating a habit in the right direction. But on the other hand, let not people talk of King James, his witches and warlocks, when men affecting to be forward in progress are as indifferent to the acquirement of falsehood as of truth, and will swallow spiritualism, Mormonism, and fifty bare-faced impositions on human credulity.

Croker has followed Jerrold, I hear, one much longer before the world. Bitterness of feeling, and audacity were leading features in his character. He began to write in the early days of the "Quarterly Review," and under the anonymous of the publication, aided in making political feeling the standard of literary merit. Youth, age, genius, if of the wrong political colour, were objects of his unsparing vituperation. Without depth, he possessed a species of cleverness which served his purpose better. If he failed in argument, he never failed to wound, which was more congenial to his temperament. It is true he was not so vulgar as Gifford, but he was as good a hater. He catered for number one with indefatigable perseverance in early life. He spared nobody, and I should imagine never had a real friend. With Hook, for example, he affected friend-

ship, and I presume, but do not know it, was the author of the paper in the "Quarterly" upon him. Croker affected distaste of Hook's unmarried state as immoral. The mode of life of the late Marquis of Hertford was well known; Croker pretended that an apology was necessary for riding in the carriage with the Marquis and a certain lady. Perhaps he remembered how small Mrs. Clarke had made him look at the outset of his career, when examined before a committee of the House of Commons, and had an antipathy to ladies not outrageously virtuous in consequence. Perhaps, it was a real sense of religion, a feeling of scrupulous morality, and therefore not to be blamed.

It was true Croker wrote papers full of zeal for religion, and as far as they went, his faith was unimpeachable, he being then, the most devotional of Christians. Now, there is a species of hypocrisy too prevalent exhibited in writing one thing for the public, and saying the reverse in company. Croker was one of this complexion. A friend of mine said to me, "Does not Croker's mockings of religion at table annoy you?" I replied, "they are in bad taste." He said, "I am greatly annoyed by it. Croker is a high church writer. No man of capacity can think and not have some feeling of religion. My ideas are my own. I believe in God, in his wisdom and goodness; I act to the best of my reason. I go at times to church, my wife and family go regularly. If hereafter, they see it necessary to change their faith, that is not my affair; they have had the institutes of religion as their parents had before them; I attempt not to make them converts to my ideas—I have some peculiar

ones on religion. When Croker dines with me, I am pained at the levity of his conversation with such professions, before young people too. I cannot away with it. My feelings will not let me jest, even with the religious creeds I do not believe; he jests with those he upholds with his pen."

The inconsistency of such a line of conduct had long fixed my opinion of the man. His splenetic attacks upon many deserving authors were of less moment, because, as I have already stated, politics ruled the "Quarterly Review" on one side, and the "Edinburgh" on the other. For my own part, I believe that put Croker behind a screen, he was equal to anything in the foregoing way. As to his political life, the less said about it the better. Poor Sir Robert Peel had he lived, could have written the political character of Croker with a fidelity that, perhaps, no one now living could do so well, particularly in illustrating the art of playing double to the best advantage. Well might Sir Robert have exclaimed, "Et tu Brute!"

Croker has left nothing literary behind him that will endure, unless it be one or two works he edited; his painstaking was not great. He was one of the most authoritative and inaccurate of writers as to facts and dates, even in the face of his own articles. He alone ruled the "Quarterly;" Gifford he kept under his thumb. Of this Southey has left an evidence in his own case, and the laureate vindicated himself with a right spirit, Croker having taken one of Southey's papers to be cut up agreeably to the views of the Duke of Wellington. What right had Croker doing Gifford's duty? The truth was, that Murray feared him. I

speak on the authority of Lockhart when I say that while he was editor, Croker would threaten Murray with a new "Quarterly" when he wished to carry some point in the review in regard to his articles, and Lockhart was at times placed between two fires.

Lockhart, at the commencement, had trouble with Southey, who, I imagine, had beforehand an eye upon the editorship of the "Quarterly" himself. Murray knew that Southey in such a post would out-Herod Herod. Southey declared afterwards, that if he wrote longer for the "Quarterly," his papers should not be cut up or altered by Lockhart. The result was, that what Southey wrote, Lockhart would not read in any shape, and the proof went to Southey. If I recollect rightly, the first paper of Southey's after this was upon a work relative to South America—but I have done with the ex-secretary of the navy. I might have said much more, but to what end? We all pass away fast enough, it is only right that truth should not be suppressed as regards those who have done with the world for ever, because survivors and posterity have to profit by example, and therefore, the motto must be, "*de mortuis nil nisi verum.*"

For my own part, I have ever felt a great distaste for that inconsistency which can prompt a man to write one thing, and profess an opposite opinion in society, a species of hypocrisy but too rife in the world. Where there is no heart, there is no truth. Expressions in parliament before the nation, the reverse of those avowed in private, come under the same category, insincerity. It recalls the excuse of a distinguished living man who, when upbraided with it, said, in a half jocular tone, "It is

true I did say so in the House, where we keep to our party, but we know better here !”

There was no wit in Croker's writings. His smart things were bitternesses, not remarkable for more than being a retort from one, who wishes to make an opponent feel that he is repaid with somewhat of interest, though not as much as the writer desired, if he could have mastered resources to go farther. He had a certain ill-natured readiness, though he was not scrupulous upon whom he directed his shafts. I consider that what some people denominate wit is no such thing. A play upon words or a pun is not wit. One says it lies most in putting together quickly a varied assemblage of ideas, in which there is resemblance and congruity to present pleasant unions to the fancy. Not every resemblance in ideas is wit, unless it gives delight and surprise. To say a woman's bosom is as white as snow is not wit, but it is wit to add it is as cold too. Another says, when there is an obvious resemblance between the ideas, some further congruity must be found to make them wit or to delight and surprise. It is false wit that consists in the resemblance of, and congruity of letters, words, syllables, and sentences. Mixed wit, a distinguished author says, abounds in Cowley more than any other author.

Italian writers have much of it; some of the French critics scorn it altogether. It is found among the Greeks almost wholly in their epigrammatists. There is little observable in the higher Latin writers except Ovid and Martial. It is more or less perfect as it lies in ideas or words. The best display of it is the modern epigram. It would seem to be essential that

wit should have its foundation in the nature of things—in truth. I am afraid, therefore, that what is taken for wit in the present day is often very far below the mark.

The movings off the stage of life, of men like Croker, and others of long standing, who were remarkable in their day, produces the conviction of their own doom strongly upon those with whom they were cotemporaries. The hiatus thus caused cannot be filled up. Worthier or more gifted men may exist, but they do not exist in the same manner for us. They are strangers, and not of our kith and kin. We have not trodden the same footpath in company. They are not familiar names. Time has not linked them to our own being, nor accustomed us to their habits, persons, and reputation. We know the virtues and defects of those we have lost, but the appurtenances of the strangers are not yet within our ken. We have not guaged, and we looked shy upon them. We want to prove their weight and value. The veil of death, the obscurity of the grave would be over us long before we could obtain the same knowledge of strangers; and finding nothing to fill the blank thus caused, we feel a saddened insulation which leaves us a prey to the past and future. This adds to the distaste of changes as we grow old. We are humbled at the thought of soon not being seen by, and of seeing the world no more. We doubt the philosophy of those who pretend a perfect resignation “to quit this insubstantial being: those thoughts that wander through eternity.” Such a resignation is too often a shuffle—the chaplain at the gallows when the halter is already attached to the drop. “To lie in

cold obstruction and to rot" is nothing. It is the exclusion from the cheerful heaven, from the rich fields and verdure, from the blue sky and the sublime ocean: it is to be cut off from human ties, from the delights of life, however scanty, yet more precious, more deeply engraven in our minds than the severest pain; it is to lose all our past acquirements, and no more see the advances of mankind towards the far distant unknown point to which the human race is advancing from the state of wild nature under Adam, to that which may make the intellect of some future middle-class race that of a Newton, and the superior soul of a coming genius, as far in advance of what Newton was "as thrice to the utmost pole." I would rather live—live for ages more if I could. I have no idea of palliating, by excuses, the desire even of an earthly interminable existence, rather than non-existence, which wish, disguise it as we may, is common to us all. Time grows dearer in age, for we only know its true value when the world becomes flat to us. I cannot bear to be threescore years and ten, acquiring knowledge, continually toiling over the midnight oil, and all in vain. As my minutes diminish I become more covetous of knowledge. It is true I make way for others—why am I so selfish?—other races are to follow me. I came from darkness and I return to it, but may I not hope to break into sunshine again from black night? I reconcile myself to it by none of the cold comforts many proffer. I know I am the creature of the Being that called me into existence for His own pleasure, and He has the right to do with me as He pleases, but the feelings of my nature are still a part of my reasoning.

Of the desire of some to live for ages in human memory only, of which we well know the vanity—that unconquerable wish that we should not “all” die, is to me unaccountable, if there be no undying principle in our nature. If no power be “above us that hath instructed in the minds of all men an ardent appetite of a lasting fame,” when nothing we clearly see has been made in vain, whence this prominent wish engrafted in our nature, and for what end? The desire of offspring ceases when the end is attained, even the parental affection diminishes in a great degree with the departure of infantine helplessness in the object protected. In age, the faculties become more obtuse; the end of existence seeming answered, there is no longer any necessity for their pristine perfection. But the idea of utter extinction is as abhorrent as ever to the most senile mind, and while no thinking being would live the same life he had led over again, the desire to live in human memory, if we do not corporeally exist, loses none of its force. This it would most assuredly do, had it no latent end, no further use under the law of our mortality. Judging, therefore, that as this wish does not abate with our other functions, even where extreme age has left but faint outlines of others, while this thirst for the life, if it be only of a name, is still as vigorous as ever, I infer that we do not all die from the circumstance alone of that perennial desire.

I once met a man upon the continent, who told me he was happy to be for ever, as he was living perfectly content. He had seen much of life, had good health, was not of a very enlarged mind, perhaps about the average. He amused himself with drawing and garden-

ing. He told me he desired no more than he had, and thanked God for that limited desire. Can there be any standard of happiness after this?—he was a lieutenant in the navy on half-pay! Must not every man's cup, large or small, be filled according to his capacity for enjoyment, if he will be content with his allowance; the passions being in repose, and the heart right. I never found a tendency to such a state in a man who had not seen the world to satiety, never in stolid ignorance, though some may think the contrary. A love of simple pleasures, and certain resources in oneself, are needful, with the conviction of knowing all useful for self-satisfaction. Ambition and ignorance are alike discontented. Vulgar, low, worldly ambition is most so, because it has no high gratification in success, and it therefore dies out still the same in its mole-hill gropings. Yet age turns to youth in some things, as in the desire to die in its old haunts, for example. A tacit confession that life has nothing more dear with all its experiences than the footprints of its earlier years, and that its leave-taking should be in their traces.

I was used in early life to enjoy my sensations alone, a solitary, not from sullenness of temper, but from the want of any to whom I could impart my thoughts. I could not make my companions comprehend them. I was, therefore, a solitary in my thinking moods, and social in my joyous ones. I hoarded my thoughts—the habit grew with me. The climate of the south-west of England, liable to showers frequently, though I have known many weeks together as dry as Egypt, receives not much more rain in quantity than falls in London. The porous hilly ground dries rapidly in summer. The

mildness of the temperature day and night, during that season, is remarkable. In June, July and August, day and night do not differ more than one or two degrees of temperature. I have longed to stretch myself, when a boy, on the rich heath, and sleep there, in place of going home to my bed, so warm and genial has been the midnight hour. Stealing out of doors when all the world was buried in sleep, I have wandered by the clear stream, or on the ocean sands, weaving wild youthful visions. It was always on bright moonlight nights I thus rambled, when the silent and serene splendour of earth's melancholy satellite steeped nature in sympathetic repose, as it walked in brightness up the midnight heaven. The waves of the restless Atlantic alone partook not in the silence and tranquil beauty around. They confessed, indeed, the luminous impress of the silvery light, flickering over their ridges before they broke upon the rocks, like distant thunder ; but that only increased the interest of the scene to my young vision. Under the frowning cliff, in deep shadow, I used to sit, if by the sea, or in a deep valley, under spreading trees, if nearer home, and there weave the most nonsensical visions, compared with life's realities, which ever entered a mortal cranium. Still, there was something not connected with every-day life, which even now makes the recollections of that time precious. The mind dwelt on nothing profound, and, on the other hand, upon nothing of daily occurrence. As I looked at the full-orbed moon, and the stars appeared to minister to her beauty, I felt a consciousness, so I fancied, of some great latent principle, in a way no lesson could ever impress me. It must be added, that though young, I was well acquainted with the theory of

astronomy. I deemed every orb an inhabited world, to which my own was scarcely worth a comparison in importance, judging from magnitudes. My grandmother had presented me with Fontenelle's "Plurality of Worlds," at twelve years of age, and my active imagination had not been idle over it. The tranquillity of the solitary hours I then stole away from sleep had something exceedingly attractive, though I do not deny that now and then my courage was tried by interrupting ideas of ghostly visitations, which I easily shook off. In the midst of large communities, this influence of self on self is little known as it is prompted by solitude in the bosom of nature.

The sentiment of religion presses upon the mind at such times as those to which I allude, the sentiment of a ruling deity, not that of pulpit-taught creed and sect, but of instinct or immatured thought. There is a consciousness of the presence somewhere, of an infinity of power and wisdom, which we cannot by any means comprehend in essence, pervading all things, to whom a past non-existence is impossible, but even if supposed possible, still, a being that has no relation to time or place, and, therefore, beyond the scope of all human comprehension.

I have often recalled something of the solitary feelings thus alluded to, but in a scene very differently pictured, when, in a moonlight morning, at two or three o'clock, I traversed the streets of London. There was no murmuring of the waves, no brilliant scenery of nature to be observed, it is true, but I imagined myself in a city of the dead, in streets of catacombs, where all before had been noisy and animated. How

came the change? Had another destroying angel been busy, not upon an Assyrian army, but upon the more persevering sons of Plutus? Had he swept away two millions from the ant-hill, so busy in the daytime? Under the old regime of watchmen, who were generally in comfort asleep in their boxes, as the pedestrian paced homewards, the silence and the similitude were perfect. Now the "poetry of life," as Talfourd would once have applied the phrase, is destroyed at such seasons, too often by some solitary policeman walking his nocturnal rounds. Still, there are few things more impressive, except it be the same city at sun-rise, from the top of St. Paul's; but that is more of a vision than a deceptive reality, for we seem beyond all connection with the things below—but enough of this return to departed imaginings.

It is impossible to pass unrecapitulated some of the acts and changes which have come under my observation in the shifting scenes of life, nor sometimes to review the past. Those whose years have run a parallel course with mine, lived in a succession pregnant with the most remarkable events that had occurred for centuries before. The disgraces inflicted upon England by the wars of George III. in America were still fresh. The discoveries of Captain Cook were novelties on every tongue, and criminal transportation to a terra incognita, as to some spot inaccessible to escape, had not begun. Little progress in the population of remote lands had been made. The savage had trodden the wilds of Australia alone. Bass's Straits were not discovered; flourishing cities now exist where the leap of the kangaroo, and the wings of the black swan were

regarded as wonders, being the sole denizens where now there are the fine streets and edifices of a civilized people. New Zealand was inhabited by cannibals building miserable canoes, a race now building their own vessels on the largest ocean of the globe, and towns, the abode of twelve thousand Europeans, stand on the site of native pas or forts a little time ago. Upper Canada was no more than a wild, now it has nearly three millions of inhabitants. The vast regions we have acquired in Africa were in the hands of the Caffre and Hottentot; and the fine colony of the Cape in those of the Dutch, to whom also Ceylon belonged, as the Mauritius did to the French, and Malta to the "Order." The increase of our India confines, Islands in the Mediterranean, and the West Indies, in short, an accession of territory and inhabitants abroad of vast amount were acquired within that term.

At home, the population increased for England, Wales, and Scotland, from under ten to twenty-one millions, and Ireland from two and a half millions to seven. London, which numbered hardly eight hundred thousand souls, reached two and a half millions. France, notwithstanding wars and revolutions, saw an access of population from twenty-six to thirty-three millions and a half, and the United States of America from five to twenty-five millions; thus giving proof of the more rapid increase since of civilized nations, and of the more advantageous culture of the earth's surface over which it has been spreading.

Equally as important has been the progress in Christian philanthropy. Howard kindled the flame of true benevolence, that bestowed on the prisoner and the

criminal a degree of treatment more reconcileable with Christianity than before. He plunged into the noisome dungeon, exhaled the atmosphere of the Eastern pestilence, administered to the wants of the suffering, and called the attention of crowned heads to the humanity they had neglected, until at Cherson he became the victim of his own virtues. In this same eventful period Jenner, in the face of great opposition, introduced vaccination, and robbed the King of Terrors to a great extent of a premature prey. In this period, too, England broke asunder, first, the shameful traffic in human flesh, and then the chains of slavery, and proclaimed all freemen over whom her banner waves, the noblest tribute to humanity ever paid by any people. The freedom of trade, and removal of the monopoly of the food of the people, was another great work, equally beneficial to all. Nor must the removal of the intolerant enactments against freedom of religious opinion be forgotten. The natural corollary of liberty in action. The instruction of the poor, long opposed by the clergy and wealthy to the utmost, we now find upheld by those who were then inimical to it, and popular representation has been reformed.

Steam has been made the medium of motion on land and sea, or rather, navigation has been indebted to fire for a motive power unlimited in energy. It has also received immense advantages from the observation of currents, the direction of the winds, and the recorded dip of the needle. The Arctic seas have been explored with marvellous intrepidity, and the magnetic poles discovered. Electricity, voltaism and magnetism, have been found identical, and by the electric telegraph, man has proved the nihility of time, as being no more than a

succession of events. Mail vessels, which in my boyhood consumed three months to reach America and return, and five only to reach Bengal, now achieve the same distance in less than one in the first case, and three the second. Much more work is thus gained by the economy of time. Ships are built which would astonish the great early circumnavigators of Elizabeth's time to behold. Every petty merchantman achieves now as much as Drake and Raleigh could perform. Chemistry has overturned past theories, opened new day upon the previous darkness, defined the bases of all existing substances, detected new, and shown in photography, the effect of light on delicate mediums. In the one case, all the old theories in relation to matter, or rather to existing substances, have been overturned, and combinations without number have laid open simple principles, every combination displaying order, and the logos or wisdom that formed them. Astronomy has disclosed wonders not before dreamed of. In the other instance, two planets, and no less than fifteen asteroids or small planets have been added to the system. While only seven in all had been discovered for two thousand years before. Binary systems of stars have been observed, and nebulæ, or the clouds of light, apparently seen in the heavens, have been resolved into thousands of brilliant orbs. The diving-bell has enabled us to penetrate into the ocean depths, and the balloon to pass the region of the clouds, within the same term.

Geology, a new science, has arisen, completely changing the preconceived traditions regarding the component parts of the earth's formation, and their ages, no way deceptive, unless the evidences of the visual organ and of reason be utterly abandoned. This same geology

has shewn us new wonders in the all-creative skill, the sustaining power of the eternal logos. Our roads, always of the utmost importance in countries far advanced in civilization, have come to be constructed like the walks in the pleasure grounds of a great landed proprietor, and the invention of mail coaches for the conveyance of letters, coming within the term to which I am alluding, were quickened upon them, until in a great measure superseded by the rail carriage, which accelerated the rapidity of epistolary communication, to twenty-five and thirty miles an hour, increasing the letter communication from seventy-six millions to three hundred and seventy-nine.

The railroads and their construction would be wonders in themselves for a whole generation, did we not live in a period of accumulating marvels, our operations in the main meeting success in a degree of proportion to our faithful reliance upon experiment in place of theory in testing them. We now disregard those impossibilities of the past, which were a part of the creed of those who went before us, arising from the fetters of a narrow religion which subjected every measure for fourteen centuries to the confined views of an ignorant and usurping priesthood, cramping mental exertion to retain a slavish dominion over the mind. Thus but for the invention of printing, and the boldness of Luther, we should have been kept in the same state as our fathers to this hour. The history of Gallileo proves this, whose theory of the world's motion the pope has just announced his permission to those of his faith to believe, two hundred years after everybody else had been so premature as to credit it.

The progress in the mechanical arts kept an equal pace with everything besides, during the period of which I am speaking—the threescore years and ten of a life. Watt, and other engineers, who well knew the power of high steam, would not use it. To do so with safety, required an accurate computation of the strength of metals, and a degree of nice workmanship, to which the men of his time were unequal. All this has been overcome. The terrible force of steam is now used at high pressure with perfect ease and safety, and the atmospherical engine of Newcomen, from being less complex, has been restored to use in many cases. Such are the revolutions in scientific art, that even water has been daringly heated to redness, without an explosion, by being subjected to enormous pressure. Then the art of watch and chronometer making, so essential to navigation and astronomy, have been brought to such a degree of perfection, that a vessel may sail by the instrument to within a league or two of any given point in longitude with perfect facility.

Since I saw the light, the revenue has risen from fifteen to seventy millions sterling, and the interest of the debt from nine to twenty-nine millions. In our manufactories the same progress has occurred as in everything else. In the year 1785, we manufactured eleven millions and a half pounds of cotton, valued at five millions of pounds sterling; we now export to the value of twenty-nine millions sterling, and manufacture eight hundred millions of pounds of raw cotton. Nineteen millions of yards of linen, valued at nearly a million sterling were manufactured; and recently the value of three and a half millions were actually exported. A proportional

increase appears in silk, goods, in mining, and other products of these islands. In shipping, the tonnage is between four and five millions from one quarter of that amount, and the commercial vessels reach thirty-four thousand in number under the British flag, irrespective of the royal navy, which has proportionably improved and increased. For seventeen centuries preceding, mind had been repressed, and new ideas scouted, if not made passports to persecution. France, catching the flame of freedom from America, her people harassed and weighed down by despotism and taxation, felt the spirit of freedom glow within her borders. Her tremendous revolution developed, not merely her physical, but her mental, energies. The tender of portions of the French territory to the surrounding despots of Europe, by the French princes, if they would invade France, and replace the weak monarch, tottering on his throne, roused the spirit of the people. Greedy for prey, combined Europe attacked that people, and were discomfited. George III. took the alarm; and, with his minister, joined in the common effort to force a Bourbon prince on the French nation. The unfortunate and feeble-minded king of France fell a victim to the faults of his predecessor, combined with those of his existing family. The feeling of alarm it produced here, though I was a mere child, I well recollect. The doctrine of divine right was then largely credited. The sacrilege, for it was styled no less, practised on a monarch's person, in the revolution, was declared something indescribably horrible, but that did not prevent the last partition of Poland by three grasping despotisms, at the very time their complaints of France were so loudly raised. The sale of the church

plate, a year or two before, was said to be alone enough to provoke heaven's judgment against the French. Then came the violent proceedings of the factions, and, above all, their word "equality" which, in England, did their cause an enormous mischief. The congratulations on the success of General Dumourier, when he so signally punished the insolence of Prussia and Austria, with half-disciplined troops, in the first coalition against France, were considered more alarming. England joined the second coalition openly with five other powers she had subsidized. Bonaparte, who had won fifteen battles against Austria, and made her sign the treaties of Leoben and Campo Formio, had set sail for Egypt. There some youths, three or four years older than myself, once my companions, embarked to serve under Abercrombie. Bonaparte, after conquering Egypt from the Turks, returned; and, being made first consul of France, beat the Austrians finally at Marengo, and shattered the second coalition. The third, which broke Pitt's heart by its failure at Austerlitz, I well remember, and that the battle of Trafalgar could not salve the wound. In fact, that minister, without experience, was unfortunate in all his operations. All the subsequent events are fresh in memory; and what mighty events they were down to the time when Europe was at the feet of a victor, finally vanquished by the snows of Russia, rather than by the arms of his foes! The dream of the European kings was verified for a moment, only to be dissipated for ever. What battles took place, and what torrents of blood were shed before France ceased to dictate to Europe! The coalesced sovereigns, grown wiser in 1830, left France to enjoy the benefit of her revolution, or

whatever evil it might inflict, as George III. and his minister would have acted more wisely and justly to let her do before. What calamities and conflicts have happened within my term of existence, and of what stupendous magnitude! The very art of war was changed. The soldier, of interest on the continent, a colonel in the cradle, and boys with regiments, who know nothing, and could do nothing, were set aside under the new system of things. Wonderful have been the changes wrought in old court vices and corruptions. All those changes and events were the effects of the French revolution, which brought out men and things after the necessities of the time, and made sovereigns see they could no more boast of reigning only for their own pleasure. The world was flung forward by that revolution many centuries in advance of what it would otherwise have been, and the universe became indebted to the events of a period, during which, as I have before observed, the aspect was so lowering, and the conflict of opinions, as well as of arms, so obstinate and prolonged. The triumph, too, has been that of the people.

But I have not lived to see a peace alone after the foregoing conflicts. I have seen another war against an aggressive power triumphantly concluded. I have seen mightier efforts than England ever put forth before, exerted against Russia, without any pressure, compared to that of the past time. This has been done under a reformed government—a government that would have been proclaimed revolutionary in the days of Pitt and George III., and under a minister who supported that reform, for which he would have been consigned to the Tower, had he ventured to uphold the measure in his

own youth. What an alteration of circumstances ! What a mighty power Lord Palmerston has derived from that which was pronounced the first step to national ruin by the ministry of the earlier time, wielding, as he does, energies to which those of the past were as childhood to the full-grown man. The politics of George III. and Pitt could not now rule England for a month. Principles do not change, if they are right principles. It is clear, from the conduct of Fox and Lord Grey, that the principles which now rule were perfectly well understood in their time ; but then they were principles for the benefit of the many, not of the few. Their action was stopped. From the peace to the death of Lord Londonderry there were continued tumults. The Earl of Liverpool, a nobleman of great integrity, was at the head of the ministry, one who understood free-trade principles, and used to say that trade had flourished in spite of acts of parliament to cripple it, but he would not remedy such a state of affairs. He had neither the inclination nor capacity ; and Lord Castlereagh, who was for the time pre-eminent in the cabinet, would have no progress, though he had set out in life as a thorough-going reformer. He would not even amend the criminal law. On his death, and under Canning's ministry, began that progress which ministers, favourable or unfavourable to it, were obliged to carry out. The gratifying results I have lived to see, adding yet more to the amazing mass of change for good and evil, I trust the former predominant, which passed before my vision, like the shapes in Banquo's glass.

Greece freed, Egypt became comparatively enlightened, and a highway to India for tender infants and

British nursery-maids now travelling for peaceful embarkation, that brief journey, to modern eyes, across the Isthmus, where Moses and his followers found in their feeble appliances, that only supernatural aid could save them. Ladies may ride on horseback to Jerusalem in safety from the coast, that interesting city, which, in my boyhood, it was dangerous for the most adventurous traveller to visit. South America emancipated from the Spanish yoke, and the once proud kingdom of Spain become insignificant in the European scale—the refuge of the bigot and the imbecile.

What a galaxy of great names flourished and departed since I first breathed. Frederick the Great, Catherine of Russia, Washington, Franklin, Paoli, Napoleon, Nelson, Howard, Pitt, Fox, Sheridan, Gibbon, Burke, Moreau, Massena, Wellington, Mehemet Ali, La Fayette, Watt, Bolivar, Herschel, Davy, Cowper, Darwin, Burns, Byron, and others—but I must not enumerate, the names will readily occur to any one conversant with the history of the unparelled era to which allusion is making, and to belong to which is a matter of some pride for denizens of the eighteenth century. The world has not been sparing of its eulogies upon men surpassed in no equal terms of years, any more than in the vast importance of the events in which they were concerned. Europe subjugated at the feet of France, freed by the elements. The conqueror in a hundred battles expiring on a miserable rock in the ocean, his enemies seeking to obliterate his very image from public memory among the people he ruled. Those enemies themselves expelled France, which received back the ashes of the victim of the ambition which had over-leaped itself.

What healing remedies, sometimes tardily applied, have amended usages, swept away prejudices, and repealed laws enacted in barbarous times. The present generation has no idea of the extent of these emendations. Let us take, for example, our Draconic laws, which seemed written by demons whose drink was blood. The day that saw me brought into existence, sent twenty human beings out of the world at the Old Bailey, in one morning, some for comparatively trivial offences. From eighty to a hundred were executed in London alone every year. Is there no advance, no merit in the government that swept away laws for sanctioning such murders? The pillory, too, where I had seen men of merit exposed, as well as the basest wretches, leaving the office of the executioner to the mob, who, if the criminal were obnoxious for his offences, nearly took his life by their ill-usage, and, if he had their sympathy, pelted the officers of justice; such, and many more, were signs of times now happily passed away for ever. Judges can no longer gratify political vindictiveness under the excuse of justice.

Our social state, the conduct of man towards man, a more generous way of judging each other, more amenity, and more real charity now exist; but to particularize the differences of the modes of thinking, of the manners and the times, would occupy an elaborate essay. I might enumerate, too, where we have not improved, and how much farther the encroaching hand of a mercenary disposition has gained on us, and been made the guage of thought and action—how all resolves itself into the most soul-narrowing of human pursuits. The trade which may for a time uphold the national power by the creation of

wealth, will have a continual tendency to lower the standard of high thought, and to narrow that perception which sustains the lofty spirit of freedom in great nations.

Literature of the better order has, perhaps, seen its best days, as well as the fine arts. If the latter are at a low ebb, marked alone by a respectable mediocrity, we find nothing so bad, nor anything so good, as during the time to which I allude. We furnish no longer great examples for aspiration in art. Our streets have been improved, as well as our highways, and that in a wonderful degree, though the houses of brick and plaster are only calculated to last their leases; I remember the improvements began near St. Clement's Church, Strand. We have amid our improvements not a single building displaying originality and a pure taste in architecture, beyond the class of a mansion. A noble opportunity was offered in the new Houses of Parliament. These are mere fragments of monastical and other buildings clubbed together at a vast expense, to do no honour to British taste in the eyes of foreigners. The new churches of the metropolis are, for the most part, execrable edifices; copies from the darkest and most gloomy period of the Roman creed, perhaps designed to aid its return. Our finest architectural works are our bridges, erected by engineers, the same class of men who have outshone all competition in their public undertakings, and imparted their lessons to the other European nations. They have also constructed metallic vessels of vast magnitude to be found on all the seas of the globe, grasping the reins of the ocean with gauntlets of iron.

In poetry a great diversity existed, from Cowper to

Rogers, not only good in itself, but varied in style and merit to an extraordinary degree. There will be no denial of the excellency of our writers during the last threescore years, nor of the sensible decline of our better literature at their close.

In matters of government the gloomy period of exclusive aristocratic rule has disappeared. The government and people move together, in place of being in opposition to each other. Penal acts to keep a ministry in office under other but invalid excuses, have vanished for ever. The borough system of rule by the great landowners has been changed. The people have their share in the government, of which, if they are careless, or use it unwisely, it is their own fault. No people are more wisely free. No minister with the old policy of Perceval, or Castlereagh, could hold office in England without violating the principles since made a text-book for all time. Here is a mighty change. The policy of England, not the interest of Hanover, dictates now in our continental measures. We have a sovereign English born, and educated with English ideas, a lady of whom none but the disappointed partizans of a faction ever breathed a whisper of disrespect. We have seen the disturbing policy so long persevered in, put down by the united feeling of the people. A minister called to office by the popular voice, having a genuine sense of the true position of his country, successful in a war of great magnitude, and regarded with that respect which secures unvaried attention from the more arbitrary powers on the continent. Even a revolt in India has been dealt with successfully, under one whom the people of England sent back for the sovereign's re-

approbation, and the sovereign saw the wisdom of her people's recommendation.

I am sensible of the brief and feeble nature of this recapitulation of a few things unexampled in importance noticeable in the course of a single life—it will serve to call attention to them more at large. It is gratifying to have been favoured by being one of those, of whom men in future time, and in a less stirring age will say, "What mighty events must they have witnessed who lived during such an activity, when the social world, from a fierce convulsion, leaped forward a distance in advance, that surpassed the progress of any thousand preceding years, from the fall of the empire of the city of the seven hills." It is, at least, a harmless vanity to anticipate in this mode the reflections of the unborn.

Over the drama and its advance a veil must be drawn:—it has fallen. Shakespeare, in my time, illustrated on the stage in a manner worthy of his country, and of his own glorious renown, is now a sealed book to the foreigner who visits our shores, as far as the stage is concerned. His truth and nature by no means suit the false modern ideal of those virtues. He is become the poet of the closet, the age, in its own opinion, having advanced beyond him; by the age I mean the majority, which is at present admitted to decide everything it knows and does not know, with an admitted pretension to infallibility that must not be impugned. The most wretched burlesques of the great poet, foreign frivolities, and entertainments that seem to rival each other in the descent of wit, and in their guiltlessness of merit, are all we can exhibit. This state of things has become a subject of lamentation

to such as those who, like myself, saw the stage in its better days. "We are occupied with greater things," exclaims the man of the hour; "we are playing at the hazard game of pounds, shillings and pence, and have no leisure to attend to philosophers and poets." One can only reply in the lines of Calderon :—

"And such is ignorance! Even in the sight
Of knowledge self, it draws no profit from it."

Music now takes the public regard in the place of the drama. It has the advantage, as at present exhibited, over every other art of pleasing. It excites no lofty views, and gives no trouble to the understanding. It is, therefore, adapted for popularity. In fact, the present music requires none of the feelings to be touched; for it is eminently artificial. A whole army of performers is got together, making tremendous noises,—now yelpings are heard, like those issuing from a dog-kennel, then we have the cawing of rooks, the croaking of frogs, and imitations of everything, only they must be subscribed like the painter's lion, with the name of the animal under them. Now we have a calm, then a storm, drums rolling and fiddles squeaking, sunshine and moonshine, all played instrumentally, or sung *secundem artem*; such an exhibition is called an Opera. The cleverest singers in extent of lungs are obtained, to startle by rapid changes, till even the musicians are exhausted. The complications, and the more difficult execution of the different parts, constitute the greater or less musical excellence in the present sense. The more noise and crashing resound, the more the audience applauds, utterly without judgment.

A great Italian singer who, from nervousness about making his *debüt* at our Opera, having heard much of the taste of the English opera-goers, and previously taken his place in the house to discover its critical judgment, had, he said, no fear upon the subject afterwards! The German taste rules, and as in its metaphysics so in music, it regards obscurity and complication, provided it be deeply scientific, as the Alpha and Omega. The ancients and the moderns, until recently, imagined that music should speak to the passions, and move the soul, not by mere sounds, scientifically arranged, but by the impression created, simple, melodious, and natural. We now hear none of those airs, and short pieces, Italian or English, which were heard in past time. The rage in this respect is just for the reverse of what it should be, and by no means an advance, except in executing difficulties. There is a great falling off of late years in the character of our own music.

A word on a different subject; among the modern fashions in dress, I observe some which have recently returned again, completing the cycle accident or caprice may have induced the fantasy of the fair sex to complete. The repetition of dresses worn when I was a child, I see continually. I cut up cane from my mother's hoops to make childish bows to shoot across the dining-room. The monstrous deformities called crinolines are but another version of the same disfigurements. The carmelite, I remember, which has recently returned again, but hair powder, pomatum, stiff curls and gold dust, cushions on the top of the head like bee-hives, with streamers attached, and high-heeled shoes and buckles have not yet re-appeared.

The plagiarisms from the past are too remote to be perceived. The treaty of Amiens, by throwing open the good city of Paris for a brief period, introduced the changed costumes of the Parisian capital, which none could well resist. The cry of Jacobinism, and all the artillery of the Pitt school had been exerted to keep out revolutionary fashions. The monthly doll sent from Paris in former years, was now banned, lest its petticoats might have a tendency to bring in the savour of republicanism. It was brought round by Holland for a short time, but France having occupied that country, the milliners of England were thrown upon their own resources, and singular shapes they invented. At the Peace of Amiens came in the Gallic mode again, after the Grecian taste ; powder banished ; the natural hair worn with a few flowers. It was visible too in naked arms, short waists, and flowing dresses. Most of the old ladies were too patriotic to adopt the new taste at once. The old men still wore their powdered clubs and pig-tails, but the youths cut their hair short, and adopted the new fashion except the stiffly loyal. The army was kept to its long coats and black gaiters up to the knee, the ponderous firelock unlightened, and the hair above the long leather-cased queue pipe-clayed, and the cocked hat over all for the battalion companies at least, keeping up the Hanoverian clumsiness of the military appearance, until a comparative recent date. The Blues wore cocked hats and long blue coats faced with buff, and carried a musket slung at their sides on horseback, in place of a carbine. The two regiments of Life Guards wore red and white, but were in other respects accoutred the

same. George III., at court, wore a suit of white velvet and a rose-coloured satin waistcoat, little becoming his florid complexion. The Prince of Wales, in the height of dissipation, wore green velvet striped coats, embroidered with silver flowers, or deep brown velvet ones silver embroidered, with cut steel buttons, and a gold net thrown over all. Pea-green coats were common. I remember wearing a coat of that colour, with buttons half way up the arm on the outside. Blue and red marked the Tory wearer, and blue and buff the Whig. The Radicals were then in the shell, for if any one of a more liberal feeling called out "reform" too loudly, he had a good chance of a long incarceration, for the judges were quite subservient, in those days, to the crown.

From the ladies, nothing was heard, but the most extraordinary descriptions of the colours and stuffs they wore.

"Pray, my dear mother, what is 'bullet rouge ribbon?'"

"A peculiar red, my dear, this in my bonnet. It was worn before you were born, and was so named from the red hot balls fired by General Elliot at the siege of Gibraltar."

There were soufflé gauzes, cloaks à la d'Artois, like men's box coats, with a tassel at the back, and the colour Boue de Paris. There was a colour called the Emperor's Eye, Ninon feathers, huge chip hats, the crowns surrounded with crinkled gauze, while over all, black or white ostrich feathers nodded like the plumes on a hearse. Paint continued to be used, at a late period, down to the winter of 1805. I refer not to a little

hare's-foot rouge, but to well caked white paint, which would fall off in scales, as I once witnessed from an old duchess of renown, at a city ball, in the year after that above mentioned. Cosmetics were in plenty, too, at that time, but I do not see one now, the name of which has survived. There was a *poudre d'Artois*, a milk of Circassia, and a balm of lillies, but the renowned Macassar belongs to a later era.

The equipages of that time were as fantastical as the dresses. There was a carriage that went upon three wheels. Another was called a *tim-whiskey*, for *stanhope* and *tilbury* were as yet unborn. The ladies went to court in chairs decorated externally with not a few ornaments. The intermediate vehicles up to a *coach-and-six*, which several gentlemen of the old school still used at county meetings and race-courses, were numerous.

The late Sir John St. Aubyn used to tell a story when he was a county member, of his canvass in a coach and six, and having got out of his equipage to pay his compliments to the worthy freeholder, hearing the wife say to her husband, "Jan, Jan, turn the pigs out of the parlour, Sir John St. Aubyn is coming."

There was a *vis-à-vis* for two, generally used by gentlemen going to court, superbly ornamented, and the horse richly caparisoned, with two or three footmen behind in gay liveries. There was the lofty phaeton, generally used with four horses, high enough to look into a first floor window. Some of these carriages had silver pannellings. The Prince of Wales launched the most extravagant equipages, crowned with coronets and plumes. The panels fitted with paintings of squabby Cupids and rustic nymphs. The latest and most tasteful vehicle of

the old time was the curricule, but it required two mounted servants. The cheapness of the brougham with one horse, lugging a half dozen family to a dinner, would, in those days, have caused a sneer at the derangement of the dresses, if not at the shabby economy.

Thus much for the difference of the fashions, which it is easy to compare with those of the passing hour. Nothing will better display the caprices of the Protean lady, than the contrast of the two periods. Their extent of difference is scarcely to be imagined.

To sum up in the way of retrospect—in a free country with an overflowing population, ever energetic and active, each short succession of time must exhibit sensible changes in manners and fashions, but half a century is no short term of itself, without reference to life. Political sentiments, and even those of morality greatly fluctuated during that period. The differences are only discoverable by a comparison of the past with the present. Classes have blended, the artificial has assumed new phases, and profitable memorials become lost in oblivion, much more than might be supposed. The changes occurring in a single life pass by loosely noted, or the pages of history would be far more attractive in conjunction with that which comes home to every human heart, by adding to them comparative pictures of social life in place of confining them to conjecture, court intrigue, political chicanery, and sanguinary warfare. History might have its social as well as political chronicles, the economy of society as well as the disposition of rulers. Thus the advantage of a more extended comparison might be obtained between the merits, defects, retrogradation and advance of a people.

There is difficulty in making out an account of this kind from its voluminous nature. The manners and fashions of the passing hour may be caught partially, in the details of novel writers. The truth must not be literally told in its day. Amplitude of laudation is expected when the existing hour enters into the comparison. It is not easy to overcome the bias and prejudice current from the habit of seeing virtues and follies treated indiscriminately. Yet there are sufficient grounds in our present superiority of position for administering nutriment to self-love, without violating propriety by exaggeration in regard to the inferiority of the past.

If the aspect of the social body during the existence of a living individual extended into age, has undergone greater changes than ever happened before in a similar space of time, the same may be remarked in regard to all connected with opinion, and prejudices the growth of centuries. Yet in the promulgation of truth great obstacles exist, not so much out of the nature of truth itself as from the fear of putting in vogue, what may be held in discredit by those whose ideas being in arrear, are upon every ground unworthy of attention. Modern manners are upon this account a hazardous topic, while those of half a century ago are safe ground. Principles do more for men now than they ever did, while men never did so little for principles. Hence moral courage is no trait of the time, while animal courage was never more abundant, though this truth will be questioned by existing vanity. Freedom of opinion, too, was never more enjoyed, nor its value worse estimated. Self-interest, the most sincere of anomalous

virtues, is not seldom mistaken about what is honourable and dignified, and yet its rule was never more extended.

With all this, the advantage is with the youth rather than the aged among the living. We stand upon higher ground than our parents stood, deny it who may, for our views are more extended. For want of this reflection false reasoning is continual. Even our statesmen are apt to legislate after the manner of half a century ago, or as if they were the municipal council of a petty borough, and treat a mighty empire, as such sage people treat narrow questions, niggling and half performing their work, from the dread of opening their eyes wider. Yet no one will dispute the superior wisdom displayed in the conduct of our existing statesmen, their more liberal measures, sounder judgment, juster views, and wider development of political knowledge. What we now denominate "narrow views," would have made the world declare us, half a century back, worthy of the pillory for our revolutionary doctrines. We move in vaster circles than the world did then. We dare unpardonable things for that epoch. Its rarities are our commonplaces; its giants our dwarfs. Our lungs require a more extended space to breathe freely. Our railways at fifty miles an hour, would, if proposed to them, have been treated like the fiction of Aladin's lamp, and yet we want to double our marvels. The vision now takes in half the world, though once it went not beyond the sensible horizon, and although it may not impart lofty aspirations, nor enlarge the heart, nor oppress the imagination with its boundlessness, but turning to self-interest, see in all but a larger mart for

traffic, and extend its views to new worlds for no other end but to play Alexander in huckstering.

But with the masses, this perversion of vision is the indirect source of usefulness. The many can scarcely be better employed than we find them, they can neither be of the wiser order of their species, nor live out of the vulgar circle like philosophers. The bulk of the community is of one idea, and the lapse of time shows more strongly than ever, that improvement operates only through the impulse given by a few superior minds, and that but for such minds, all must have stood still. How much more our mighty advance will contribute to the general welfare than the past has done, posterity will be best able to ascertain. That the labour of the multitude is increased cannot be doubted, body and soul chained to toil in trying to avoid the criminal imputation of poverty. There is a staid, laborious aspect over the land, which belongs to the later period, the population seeming under an incubus, from the cradle to the grave. The history of individual existence appears more humiliating to our nature than in my youth. Nine tenths of the population seem born only to contribute to the redemption of its fear of self-immolation, at no small cost to the virtues of the heart with some, and with others, to the destruction of all spirit-cheering intercourse.

Such is the general appearance of things, but has the advanced state of the empire no relieving lights—is it possible to look over the surface of the country, and seeing the magnitude of labour, the prodigality of wealth, the unwearied industry, the comfort and increased intelligence on all sides, and not be sensible that

existing evils have their counterpoises! That the present good has not compensated for past ills! England, that ocean of existences ever heaving and fluctuating, carries at present upon its bosom latent freights for the coming time to unlade—freights more vast and important than the living dream about. These may be purchased at some expense of social happiness, and may, or may not be worth the cost. We know where the accumulation of power and wealth began, but we know not where it will determine, and hence we cannot estimate its value.

Social comforts with the multitude, are in accordance in a considerable degree with the manners and fashions of the hour, if not dependent upon them, as novels are sometimes coloured by them. Indeed, at one period in the last century, it was attempted to regulate manners by a society for the purpose. This attempt is upon record as a singular instance of the futility of such intermeddlings. Virtue cannot be inculcated by force, it is the offspring of persuasion alone. There is a better understanding now. Manners and morals are kept more distinct, even under the verbal niceties of the law, thanks to the increased intelligence of the time. Societies for penal purposes are nearly extinct, although the present century has seen many, which, with an affected religious or moral object, held political animosity for their moving principle. The Society for the Suppression of Vice is the only one left of this class, valorous against small offenders, but, like an alguazil of Spain, lame of a leg, or blind of an eye, when there is magnitude of station with which to contend. The new police have done such societies a considerable

injury, with much more regard to the principles of justice.

England was never seen by any living individual, physically and morally stronger than at present, a matter of importance where to be weak is to be miserable. As neither virtue nor inoffensiveness is a barrier against individual attack, so with nations the feeble are always outraged by the powerful. The eagle fallen at the last peace, the congregated vultures paid no respect to promises nor treaties with the talonless inhabitants of the air, when they come to divide their prey. The strength of England is not only a greater security to herself now than it ever was, but also to feeble nations against the strong. As Henry IV. of France observed of his child, "He lives for all the world." Just so England has reached a point where she seems necessary for all the world. She overawes, balances, or unites other lands, and preserves general tranquillity. Her bold commercial policy, not yet fully developed, connects the interests of other empires with hers, and they feel that in this respect she is a part of themselves. There is oftentimes a common interest stronger than any alliance effected by diplomacy, a bond of more worth than the words of kings, in the mutual benefit of a gainful popular intercourse. The last century could not say this with such soundness of justice.

In the grand state of the empire at present, the obliquitous tendencies of a few weak minds can hardly seem worthy to provoke a remark. The glories of Saxon and Norman rule, interminable Jeremiads at the degeneracy of existing things compared to departed barbarisms, the loss of relic and monkery, of mail-clad

lords, feudal crime, and serfship are heard from those who dream in their sleep of ignorance about the past. The men in steel of the days of the Plantagenets, with the monks who read and wrote at their sides, would now feel sadly out of place. A lodging in Newgate for the exercise of some manorial act, innocent in past times, but now denominated murder or rape, would put an end to their assumptions. The mind that reasons can hardly come to the conclusion of some "brotherless hermits," that to have such ruffians back, to recal the Nevils and Plantagenets, we should give up our arts and learning, our commerce and the brotherhood of nations. The puerilities of mediæval superstition, with fire and faggot argument, can have no hold, but upon feeble minds lusting after ecclesiastical power, or upon human fears cultivated by ignorance. With our scientific improvements, individual comfort, and great national strength, let us ask even insanity itself whether it would not exceed all dementation to exchange our commodious dwellings and streets for those corroded with filth, and plague and leprosy; the sanguinary quarrels of the ignorant chiefs of feudal times for our tranquillity; the conflicts between the houses of York and Lancaster, or even the law-breaking hypocrisy of the Stuarts, for our peaceful senatorial arrangements under a constitutional government; arbitrary rule, and inglorious deeds, and savage laws, as an apology for lawlessness, in place of our pure judicial administration, the latter more advanced in the last half century than for ages before. The Percies and Douglasses of the past were little better than border bandits, leading their unhappy slaves to bloodshed,

kith and kin distinguished for their furtive propensities. It is true, they were good enough to be the best in a bad day, but to have them back again, with their manners and superstitions, it would be similar to uttering prayers for the calamity anew, which De Foe has so well depicted as having nearly destroyed the metropolis.

The prowess of Englishmen in modern battle-fields has equalled anything displayed in the undisciplined forays of the past time. The navy of England now is equal to that which Edward III. took to Calais, when he required seven hundred and fifty-eight vessels to convey fifteen thousand soldiers and seamen! It is to the credit of our more ignorant ancestors, that they wielded their ignorance to the best advantage, but that man must be no better than an idiot who can desire it now. There are some may do so in faith, who would illuminate the shrine of Thomas à Beckett again, but such are exceptions to the great body of the people.

The men of the present time are not to be undervalued compared with their sires, for with all their faults, they exhibit some countervailing good. Their perseverance in action is worthy of admiration, far excelling their fathers threescore years ago. They may not claim more than intellectual mediocrity, but this mediocrity is far above the standard of that which preceded them. If life by the philosopher be deemed a purposeless employment with the many, still to be subordinate agents in indirect good is sufficient for ordinary people. The entire of a community cannot be that which saints and philosophers desire. The love of acquirement may

generate covetousness, and diminish love of kind and generous emotions, in the individual acting alone, but this may be balanced by the aggregate action. Evil produces good so unexpectedly sometimes in the common course of things, that we must wait results, not venturing to predicate them now, any more than in preceding times. The law of the past is the same here. The labourers of the hive are the most numerous class. Though their duties are circumscribed, they are the most useful of its inhabitants, and their utility to themselves and the community has doubled. They may set little store upon innate things, their virtue being extrinsic. If they are more purely conventional in faith and works than other Christians, it helps their worldly object. Why so many must spend life in "low pursuits," we can only suppose to be a part of the great scheme of nature for the ultimate, and no doubt wise, object towards which humanity is ascending in a world not yet a tithe peopled. It may chance a hundred ages hence, that others will be able to hazard more valid conjectures on the subject than we can do.

In every pursuit the modern view is wider. In the nineteenth century, trade and manufactures have their aristocracy and democracy. The aristocracy of commerce comprises the merchants, bankers, and manufacturers of capital; the democracy includes the mechanics and workmen. The merchant operates now over the entire globe, and his knowledge of the countries with which he corresponds is frequently personal. Fifty years ago, the sphere of his present traffic was, in many cases, a savage desert, almost unknown. His correspondence is

now as extensive as the field of his operations; and in the last half century it is astonishing how familiar to him have those countries become, that were then wholly strange, or only read of in voyages of discovery. The mind insensibly partakes of the extension to which its occupations bear relation, though it may not be required for its own ends; hence arise a magnitude of operations in the natural course of things, unknown in the last age. Boldness, decision, judgment, and experience, proportionably demanded to ensure success, have proportionably increased. The retail dealer, remaining in nearly the same limited sphere as before, has by no means made the same mental progress. Compared to the merchant, both the mechanic and manufacturer may, as a general rule, be deemed somewhat more confined in their operations. The British merchant is the animating spirit of the popular frame, skilful in adventure, extensive in means, and unrivalled in probity. The banker and manufacturer are linked to him, the union animates the masses around and beneath, forming the wheels that bear along the stupendous machine of natural prosperity. When untoward seasons create a famine, it is to the merchant the country looks to escape annihilation. By his agency, England has now become the deposit of the treasures of the east and west. With him are to be found records of all the monetary transactions going forward throughout the globe. We now confess what but a few years since was denied on the authority of Parliament, that coin is a mere commodity, like any other in the market, and that a depreciated bank-note possesses not its nominal value in gold, although Parliament did in its omnipotence declare the

contrary to be a solemn truth. King Canute, when he ordered the waves to retire, was a faithful type of the Commons of England some time ago, on that memorable occasion. Our legislators are at present much wiser. The merchant was wiser in those days, but his voice was not heard ; it would be heard and respected now, even by the "country gentlemen," who then thought to make nothing of a verity. The influence of the English merchant is known, and that influence is a regulating principle everywhere. It penetrates through the ice to Archangel ; it opens the coffers of the Siberian miner, extracts the diamond from the Brazilian washings, and gold from the Australian and Californian digger ; it is acknowledged in Pekin ; and, making a highway of Egypt, governs the capital of the Mogul :

A few years ago the pursuits of Englishmen, though of a limited character, were concentrated upon a fixed end. They were generally governed by one idea, and that obtained second-hand. Then, as now, they scrambled over obstacles, leaped barriers, and braved danger to attain the desired object. But, their judgment was only accurate upon what they made their main pursuit ; and this is the case still. They are incapable of application to unaccustomed things, and liable to imposition. The plain, tangible object was that about which they showed an interest deficient at all times in foreseeing remoter consequences. It is only what concerns the interest that rules the decision, thus if the relations are with people of rank, in the way of patronage, they exhibit a thorough contempt for the vulgar. If the reverse be the case, people of rank become the objects of their censure ; just so it was in times past. In politics, an

attack upon a foreign interest, or the freedom of a colony, passes unnoticed. The lion must be roused from his lair by something that affects himself or his party, and those of his own side must reiterate alarms about his own wrong or disadvantage, which he cleverly mixes up with the public question. He then vapours in right earnest, shakes his grim front, alarms the government, gains his end, retires to his shop flushed with success, and egotistic about his patriotism. Let India perish, or the Cape sink into the sea, it is of no moment; but an additional threepence added to the income-tax will convert him into a flaming patriot, while his electoral duties tell a very different tale. He selects his parliamentary representative not as anciently from the burghers of his own town, for he will not aid to make his neighbour a greater man than himself, but he will listen as before the Reform Act, to some adventurer's story of his own political virtues, and give him his support in place of supporting that of the public at large, and then withdraw full of complacency, to his customary avocation. He has not much cleaner hands than of yore, as to a bribe discreetly tendered. He no longer gives his vote at the peer's dictation, or the squire's order, to secure to a portion the return from the Treasury. He bargains directly in place of through an agent; and, on the conclusion of the affair, smiles approbation at his own integrity and independence. Such seems to be the difference half a century has made in his exercise of the elective franchise, on his being placed upon a footing of independence in executing a public duty.

This exclusive attention to his own interests makes

him adverse to the receipt of new truths, his opinions being based upon what is of a good familiar standing ; an improbable truth is a positive falsehood in his eyes. Here there is not much change. In the credit given to what was once believed, second only to holy writ, old ideas in some things are not quite as exclusive as before. Truth makes its way though slowly, and now that which was deemed worthy of cremation in 1800, is hospitably entertained. A few more can discern truth at the bottom of her well ; but there she remains still seeing the stars which they cannot discover. In fact, the ascent gained by the many now in place of a less number formerly, approaches to a more decent mediocrity. There are none who rise to the splendour of a few in the past time, because diffusion, in place of concentration, has become the order of the day. Many things admitted half a century ago by a few gifted persons have not yet been rendered current coin, while some have been lately repeated as novelties. There are social paradoxes yet unexplained, but there is a vast deal of past crookedness made straight, and no small degree of wisdom has been attained from experience. A minister ambitious of power could not now run the nation eight hundred millions in debt to place a monarch on a throne against the consent of the people he governed. The few are now seen to have been right on that point, as they always are in what depends upon reason and principle. How much more worthily are the British people employed in the arts of peace, in making industrial exhibitions, and promoting a common brotherhood among nations.

The Englishman of the present day is master of more expedients than he was fifty years ago. His

incessant action would bewilder his parents. These were a more enjoying race, simple in their pleasures, and less under the influence of a superficial propriety and affectation of moral feeling. There was less hypocrisy, more heartiness, and less calculation in their actions. If there are fewer now who would champion for a principle to the outrance against interest, happily there are sounder principles current than there ever were before.

Social clubs were a past institution. They were few in the number of members, and linked in mutual kindness, bore no resemblance to the unsocial, cumbersome, anti-domestic establishments of the present day. A peculiar mark of the time is the pushing to excess everything that suits the fashion, until it loses its original character in discomfort or extravagance. The friendly intercourse of the old clubs does not exist in the new. Nothing can be more vapid than the conversation in modern club-houses. Not that men of ability are not members of them, but that for one member able to support a conversation, there are ten without an idea of anything but themselves or their professional avocations. All must be lowered to their tone. The old clubs consisted of a few persons, who were more equal in regard to talents, or nearer upon an equality in mind, and attached to the end of the institution, if it were of any peculiar character. Thus mutual information was imparted, and men drawn more towards each other by congenial pursuits, formed friendships that lasted through life. Even as to exclusiveness little is now gained, notwithstanding the black-ball system. The truth is, the ballot goes much by interest.

In a well-known club which has many candidates and few vacancies, it is quite common to black-ball all down to a particular name, which the members feel desirous should be among them, and interest is made for the particular candidate accordingly. They have no scruple about rejecting men of high honour and unimpeachable character, to whom they have no objection except that they prefer or are pressed to admit another, who stands perhaps forty down upon the list in order of application. Justice and the principle of honour have no hold here. Nor is the ballot at any time a security against obnoxious persons, unless they are publicly and notoriously known to be so. Even common honesty and decent manners are not guaranteed by it. In one club a member may be discovered walking away with a purloined quire of paper, and a stick of sealing-wax in his pocket; in another, acts happen which rigid committees endeavour to prevent, that would hardly have occurred in the most uneducated and vulgar classes of society. Compared to the old club, the resemblance, therefore, is but small. The multitudinous, sullen, ostentatious, modern establishments, without friendly intercourse, are but reflections of the fashion of the day:—aimless, heartless, but superficially imposing. There is nothing gained in these social bodies by the lapse of half a century.

The attachment to a country life is more lessened than it was; this is a growing evil. There are numbers who, out of restlessness of temper, talk of the country, and pay it brief visits from the pure love of change, but in reality know not what it is. They must carry their town luxuries with them to the letter, and all

is well. So the young guardsman said he did not mind hard service, let him but have a tender steak, a silver fork, and a plate rubbed with a shallot. The enormous extension of our principal towns, continually adds to the number of those whose earliest years pass between four brick walls, receiving a dingy light through smoke-blinded casements. Youthful associations, or those most vivid and permanent, are not with green fields, or the beauty of the heavens. The sentiment and feeling must be differently allied. Smoky streets, and shops decorated with splendid wares, all that human ingenuity can execute, imprint their images on the young retina, but mountain, vale and woodland are foreign. The more gorgeous landscapes are the perspective of broad streets and glittering equipages, plastered brick, and plate glass,—the hollow and extrinsic. The healthful, serene, and simple character of natural beauty, or the sublimer objects which present themselves in romantic scenery, have only a passing interest for them to what they had formerly.

A lady of the civic stamp visiting Wales, was prevailed upon to ascend a high mountain, one side of which, from the summit downwards, was an awful precipice. The view, far and near, was magnificent. The party were silent with admiration, and even apprehension, for they stood on the thrilling verge of a perpendicular descent, and one step would have plunged them into eternity. Insensible to the beauty of the scenery, as to the consequence of a slight movement of position, she broke the general silence by the exclamation: "I forgot to order a pudding to be added to the dinner at the inn."

What vast congregations of men now live strange to any world but that which man has made; it was different in my boyhood. With such, the tasteless uniformity of the dingiest street is now the dearest association of early life. Within its habitations exist, or had existed, those whose memory is dear to them, and who in earlier days watched over and trained them into maturity. In them remain the hearths at which, side by side, they once sat with some visitor of their sire's, haply of no mean renown; or what was more common, heard the same tale of stocks and bargains reiterated day by day, and year by year, between the same order of visitors, at the same hour, and in the same language, until they quitted the paternal roof. How vast the increase of those with the enormous enlargement of capital, to whom woodland, mountain, or ocean shore can impart none of the feelings that are inherent to those born in the country. They may have their villa, and make its coach-house a palace, but they will be citizens still, precise, laborious, confined to a narrow mental circle, beyond which they never expatiate. They never can feel in the presence of nature, as they feel who have been born in its bosom. Hence the growing unimaginativeness of the age, and the decline of poetry; hence the decrease of reflective reading, the mediocrity in art, the unsound critical judgment prevalent, and the inconsistent character of our fictions with nature. Hence Roman characters are drawn from modern beaux, and heroines neither virtuous enough for praise, nor sufficiently vicious to be stigmatized as notoriously bad examples. All comes from our over artificial state in which the factitious makes up the

mass in everything. Greatness, simplicity, purity, fidelity in character are wanting. Everything is minute, nothing broad and ample, all in petty detail. The very hairs of our heads are numbered now.

Many of the inhabitants of the country, and some of contracted or shaken fortunes, on the other hand, help to aid in the increase of crowded communities. They find advantages of which their fathers would never have dreamed, or which they would have reprobated, in changing their ancient residences, and leaving their ample mansions desolate. They have partaken in the prevalent love of ostentation, or they can live in the capital as insulated and unsocial as they please. They can substitute for their former country hospitality, a crust of bread and solitude in town. They may live in an oblivion only second to death, economical in their obscurity, and none be the wiser. The metropolis is the darkest of living graves for those who desire retirement there, although it is the depository of high intellect. On the other hand, they may squander the rent of their country estates in the most refined luxuries all the year round, away from the troublesome solicitations of poor cottagers, or the requests of the curate for alms to sustain his pensioners. They may save the chaldron and half of coals, and the dozen of blankets, once annually doled out to the indigent, that their charitable virtues may be recorded in the local newspaper, and they may spend five, ten, or fifteen thousand per annum in a round of frivolities, their ears no longer insulted by the impertinent axiom, "that property has its duties."

Fifty years ago, the attachment to the country was carried to the opposite extreme by many who had no real feeling for its attractions. Education made its claims extravagant, and gave it attributes to which it had no right. Pastoral love, and the heathen mythology were then declared vernacular. Every boarding school girl was a Pastorella, or a Phyllis: now she is a strummer on the piano of barbarous polkas. The school-boy of fourteen was addressed as Damon or Corydon, as shy then as he is now a forward puppy. Conversation, reading, study, were all interlarded with Grecian or Roman phraseology. Love was the burthen of every song, and the courtship of our parents was amid dove cooing in green woods, or set to the warbling of nightingales. It seemed never to have been thought that nymphs and dryads could be made too cheap, and were impersonated in my youth, by hay-makers and Welsh milk-maids. Harrys and Marys were all Sylvias and Floras, modifications of heathenism in Christian guise. It is true the hallucination was harmless, however ridiculous in poetry or prose. It was a part of education, too. The gravest divines sanctioned the combination of modern females with the nymphs of the golden age; and who, in those days, dared to dispute the taste of a bewigged doctor in divinity, who made learning attractive, and settled all argument with the rod, in place of the reasoning of Locke. Coleridge said that his master was an exception to others, for even at the close of the century he ridiculed the abuse of classic terms in modern learning. "Pierian spring, boy! you mean the cloister pump."

The advantages derived from intercourse in great

communities of men are undeniable, but they have their counterbalance. The extinction of country attachment proceeds too fast. The untenanted houses of old families in the rural districts are too numerous. The parson, doctor, and attorney, ill replace the old head of the village. The new squire, who has purchased an estate in the vicinity from the proceeds of trade, has little comparative weight, he carries the mark of an upstart. His money may conquer that objection, especially as he can talk largely of the world elsewhere, but his manners will not do. The ancient predecessor, of old family, small fortune, and a mind of proportionate dimensions, finds himself outshone, and that those around him are less regardful of his exclusiveness than the gentry of a Bury St. Edmund would be. He is not revered as his sire was, and so he also betakes himself to the capital, where princes and squires are undistinguishable alike, and where he can hide his chagrin in the thought that he is no worse off than better men. In these changes we discern only one good in the rapid extinction of feudal notions.

Men are loosening their attachment to localities in general much more of late years. The rapidity and cheapness of conveyance spreads the kingdom like a map before all, from which curiosity may select its sight-seeing. The railroad is the true leveller, Pitt would have instructed the *diabolis regis* to inform against it on that score. The extension of trade renders travelling more necessary than of old, time is so economised by speed, that it is often worth while to transact business personally, when in past days, a tedious correspondence must have been the result, but it is an enemy to exclusive-

ness, it breeds too much familiarity between Durham and Devon. The sphere of observation becomes much enlarged, and the existing generation more universal in its views. Residents at a distance continually meet, and if courtesy be more extended, knowledge is also increased, the foe of the mediæval monk and arbitrary ideas. By accelerated motion we receive an addition to the term of life of which we had been six thousand years in ignorance, discovering that the duration of action does not depend alone, as heretofore imagined, upon that of integument.

The natives of our cities become more visitors to other lands. They glide along green fields, and amid mountain valleys, to which their fathers were strangers, and seeing foreign lands at thirty miles an hour, talk of having acquired a knowledge of nations, in which their fathers sojourned, for that purpose.

Being a more practical people now, we do not live so much upon wise sayings that continually break their own necks. "Wise saws and instances" made half the old instruction of youth, while the meaning was beyond youthful comprehension, where there was any meaning at all to be gathered. The mode of inculcating moral principles, as in the case of Brown, Jones, and Robinson, in the most venerated and popular of all spelling books, was no doubt of service to educate Jesuits, ministers of state, and ambassadors, if one may judge the trees by their fruit; but we have found a better scheme of morality than fear and chicanery can lay down. We no longer practice this double-faced conduct in our instruction, however much modern practice in after life may engraft its utility in our hearts, upon

taking our share in social corruptions. The strictness once observed, made youth all obedience and submission where the rod was only present, giving greater latitude when parents or instructors were out of hearing. Learning is no longer a burthen or a plague to the callow mind. We have banished such impolitic managements from all but our grammar schools, where the scholar is still taught to love learning by the repulsive means the rest of the world would use to excite a hatred of it.

Perhaps filial attachment is not so strong as it was half a century ago ; it is certain that in England it does not equal the parental in the majority of cases. Children are sent away very young from the parental home, before there is permanence of attachment, before the heart is linked from association, to an affection for absent objects. Hence filial regard is weakened. It is wonderful on the other hand, how coolly some parents will part with their children, sending them to foreign climates at a tender age, seemingly without a painful feeling, and with the chances ten to one against their ever meeting more. The hazards of torrid climes, of pestilence or sword, go for nothing. "Thank God Tom or Harry," as the case may be, "is provided for—he is off my hands." So closes the scene of filial departure. Perhaps it arises in our artificial state, from the difficulty of living, and explains how doubly our lives are lives of care. It may be well, too, with our taxed and dense population, that parental affection should be so accommodating to the exigency of the time, and universality of feeling exist among a people who must be citizens of the world. The African, or yellow fever, the

cholera, or sword of the enemy, relieve parental anxiety by a short route, and Tom or Harry somewhat prematurely pass the way of all the earth. In the lower classes there is much of the same spirit exhibited, perhaps from the same cause. The feeling is somewhat animal, for dumb creatures drive off their offspring when they can no longer take care of them themselves—man alone is patriarchal.

Thus the cosmopolitan character of England requires that its social state should be more accommodating now than in the last century. The scions of her families must be dispersed in all climes. It was impossible that, with the rapid progress of knowledge, the march of discovery, and revelations of science, we should not in some degree merge individual in general feeling, and, looking at both the old and new world, exclaim, "Creation's tenant, all the world is ours!"

Some who hanker after the barbarisms of the past tell us we are retrograding. England retrograding! We ask for the signs, and we are referred to some disadvantage a class may have sustained for the benefit of all; to some snug monopoly in decay, or time-honoured abuse rectified; some feudal barbarism extinguished, or aristocratical assumption lowered. When, in 1838, the population of the great city of New York assembled on the shores of its vast harbour to behold the first steam-boat from England; when bank and wharf, mast and house-top, were covered with myriads of admiring spectators, the descendants of Englishmen, to welcome the conquest of the ocean by steam; when the Manchester and Birmingham railway opened, and the towns and villages along the entire route lined the sides, and

the shouts of the assembled myriads rent the air as the fire-fraught traveller passed with the speed of the tempest—those things did not exhibit retrogradation. To the philosophic mind, they were heralds of yet greater things to come—stars in the east, directed to some remote unknown end; when we have brought India and America so much nearer to Europe; when we communicate by the electric telegraph; when the waves of the mysterious Red Sea, the avengers of the Jews upon the host of Pharaoh, convey our wives and infants to India, subdued by modern science into a quiet oceanic highway, we smile at the magnitude of the difficulty in past descriptions; when our population has doubled in the space of one human life, and our revenue tripled, England cannot have retrograded. In place of this, it has pleased the Supreme Being through England to develop a course of unparalleled action, in the same space of time, and to keep her in continual progression, as if she were destined to become to the world in the useful, what Greece became in the fine arts. Thus England promises to become an agent in contributing to the comfort and happiness of mankind, in a mode of the ultimate extent of which the present generation can form no conjecture. So far from retrograding, we marvel at our past dilatoriness, and are restless and feverish at the idea of standing still. Ideas expand with the field of bodily action, and morals share in the benefit. Men hate each other no longer for their political opinions, an equal right to judge for themselves being admitted for all. In religion the same moderation has superseded past bigotry, except among those who profess the faith they do not practise. Even

the asperity of ecclesiastical enmity is a little softened, and the gloom of seventeen hundred years of disputes and persecutions has changed into the hope of a brighter future. I could bear personal witness to social changes almost incredible, did I not recollect that there is a second generation at present from that to which I refer.

It is cheering to observe, in our advancing years, the morn of a better day give birth to fresh hope, to mark its brightness in the direction of the meridian, raising visions of splendour to come, which neither the Athenian before the day of Pericles, nor the Jew before the consummation of his temple, could have equalled in anticipation. We look around, and scarcely doubt of what hope thus sanctifies in regard to the destiny of this great country, and of mankind. We read of the decadence of empires, from Egypt to Assyria, Assyria to Greece, Greece to imperial Rome, and of the fall of other states, repetitions of the same melancholy tale. But, even if England had commenced her "age of merchandize," she could never return to her original inciviliation. As yet we see nothing save the forward march. Our spirits are unbroken by the tyranny of rulers, by capricious luxury, or moral degradation. We do not find the means of existence so easy as to be able to recline in idleness at our hearths, leaving the morrow to its fortunes. We are a laborious, diligent people, and must be so for a long time to come. When we cease to be so, we shall find the social edifice crumble away, like some ancient building, dropping piece by piece; the hoary tints of age sully the original hue; the lichen speckling the walls, and the storm scattering them, until large fragments fall, and we find under our feet the

mouldings and sharp carvings that so lately enriched the architecture. But that day is not to be seen by the present generation. From our past history, marked in the rude stones of Avebury and Stonehenge, to the massy Norman temple, and the florid Anglo-Gothic, we have continually moved towards what was better. We feel and know that we are not yet descending from our elevated site, and that the enlargement of the national mind and our advance are correspondent. The evidence of the truth of this observation is found in our statistics, in the streets, in the roads and rivers, in our colossal railways, our mastership of the ocean by steam—in short, everywhere. For our motive skill alone hypothetically stated, we should have been held madmen by our fathers.

CONCLUSION.

To conclude.—The mind frequently glances back through the long-drawn vale of perished events, where we commonly find things arrange themselves, not according to the order of dates, but of impressions. The wheels of time roll irresistibly on, and hurry us over the vanquished years towards the inevitable goal. Hope begins to be more fitful than formerly. The sunshine that once irradiated the footsteps “from morn to dewy eve,” clouds more frequently intercept. By this, it is true, we are less often deceived, than we are in the prime and vigour of existence. But if the light shine fainter still, as with a borrowed radiance, we are enabled to compensate for the difference by recalling, amid its pale lustre, the spirits of the past. We find no inconsiderable consolation in the power of having, in recourse to that which was our own, something like a re-possession. We learn to estimate things more at their real value, are less the victims of delusion, and more the scholars of experience. We turn to what is permanent. We no longer evade great truths, but see them in all upon which time has set his seal,

and can at least boast of having witnessed mighty doings in our day. The past is unchangeably ours, and in the pleasing sadness of our retrospections, we here find sombre enjoyments, it is true, but such as we cannot expect our ever diminishing future will outrival. We look to yesterday in place of to-morrow, and deal with past realities in place of idle anticipations. We are led by memory into the bowers haunted by our earlier footsteps, and meet again our youthful loves. We see ourselves once more amid the flowers and graces of a young existence greatly withered, no more glittering with the early dew, but still redolent of a fragrance grateful to us, since the world has become a twice told tale. We thus glide back from a state of wearying and profitless expectation to the period when the days of evil had not been encountered, and we feast upon the sober fare of our acquired wisdom. Pitiable is he who has no food of this nature to nourish his latter days—a Crusoe in the desolation of his own solitude. Yet how great is the number of those who taste the dregs of existence to the glimmering of vitality, with minds preying upon their own vacancy!

For myself, I endeavour to meet the evils of my allotment with firmness. I fall back upon my own consolations, and do not look to others for supplying them. I have been permitted to enjoy pleasure, and have sustained much less bodily than mental pain. None of my faculties have failed me. I have had enough to bear, and have borne it by and within myself, in a proud silence. I have seen much of this distempered life, and have well weighed the small value of things considered its best by the majority of mankind. I have

the clearest conviction that while there is much good in the world, evil predominates, a proof, so I esteem it, of man's immortal progression.

I have fared better than I merited, but nothing near as well as the proportion of my actual toils entitled me to expect. It is true I have had the unfortunate propensity of regarding the object of my immediate labours as the principal in place of the secondary motive. I did not here tread the beaten track. But for this I am the sole sufferer in my advancing years. I never coaxed, nor flattered, nor lied, nor persevered in pestering those who have in their hands the good things of this life—my services were rendered too sincerely and too independently. I have been behind the scenes in the play of life. I have not been dazzled by the lights, the glare of which the spectators take for unborrowed radiance. I have marked the tinsel and rouge upon the performers, and watched the actions and motives of the players from the back of the stage, as well as from the front of the house. I have observed how spangle and alloy pass for rich embroidery and sterling gold, and have been at war with what the audience esteemed admirable and resplendent. I have seen the tawdry robes placed upon the shoulders of the actors, and the working of the foul ropes and pullies that set the stage machinery in motion. Perhaps it was a misfortune that I escaped this admiring contagion, and that I did not, in matters of opinion, feel the admiration of the superficial many in place of depending upon reflection, and the unbiassed judgment of the few, while loathing injustice, and rejoicing in truth.

But I have said enough upon a point which cannot

affect my charity towards mankind. After all, in the game of life, men are like schoolboys, ever bickering about their marbles, tops, and things of small moment, while they should acquire those of higher import, and be learning lessons of great pith and moment;—but I must close my “RECOLLECTIONS,” which, I regret, lapses in memory have not permitted to be more worthy of record.*

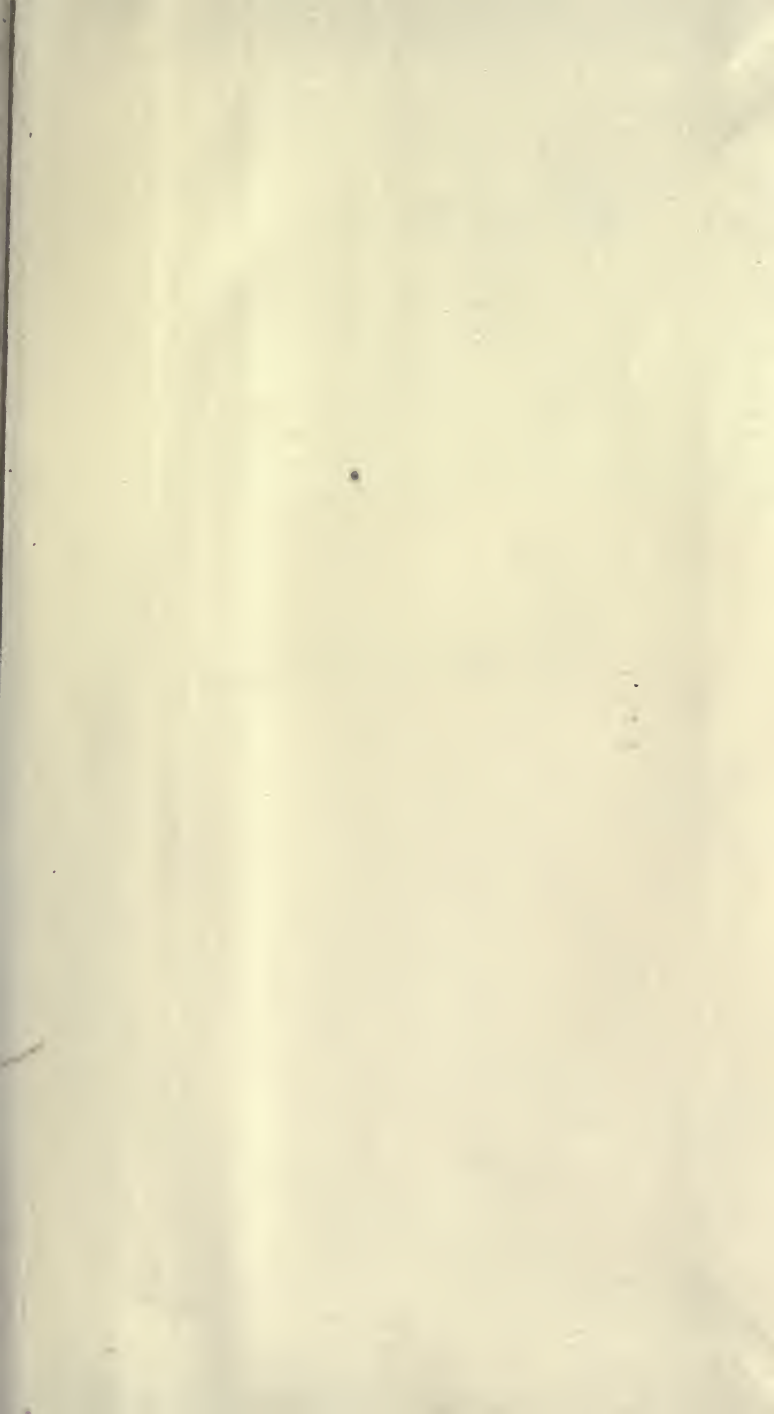
* I did not see Raikes' Journal until these volumes were completed. I was pleased to find the distaste of the Bourbons for us, as I had judged it at the time, borne out by the Duke of Wellington's high authority. The Duke stated that Ney's trial in no way came under his cognizance, and besides:—“*even at that early period, the Bourbons though so newly established in France through our means, began to be jealous of our interference in their affairs, and we (foreigners) began to be cautious of intruding our opinions, when not absolutely called for. The execution of Ney was the unbiassed act of the Bourbons.*” I believed, and do still, that the reported attempt on the life of the Duke of Wellington, was a thing got up by the emigrants and police. The Duke was on good terms with several of the French marshals, who used to visit him. Marshal Suchet, the last time I saw him, had just come from calling upon the Duke. The Bourbons did not like his reception of the Emperor's officers, and I believe the plot originated in order to make the world believe the attempt was at the instigation of the Napoleonists, and thus to cast odium upon them. The Duke offered an opportunity every day in the week for the blow of an assassin, better than at entering his own house, which had always sentries, and a captain's guard at the door. I was living in Paris at the time. I had peculiar opportunities for every kind of information. I thought then as I think now.—(See pages 63 and 104, Vol. II. of the present work.)

THE END.

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